WHAT IS CHRISTIANITY

MAULANA
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DARUL ISHAAT
URDU BAZAR, KARACHI-1
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WHAT IS CHRISTIANITY ?

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Author's Note

This work constituted a detailed introduction to the well known treatise on Christianity Izharul Haqq which was written by Maulana Rahmatullah Kairanawi in Arabic and edited and translated by me into Urdu. During the course of my work (of translating and editing), I studied the Christian religion in its original sources. The conclusions of my study constituted the said introduction which was later published separately under the title "What is Christianity".

This work has been translated into Arabic; and has met with wide acceptance. For sometime, the need was felt for an English translation, and my learned brother Muhammad Shoib Omar undertook the task.

I have read the text, and have found that the translation reflects the ability and competence of the translator. He has exercised due care and shown diligence. May Allah give him the best reward and grant him tawfiq to undertake similar academic works.

I sincerely hope that this work will assist the English reader to properly understand Christianity.

MUHAMMAD TAQI USMANI
Durban -- 13 April 1987.

Introduction to the Author

MAULANA MUHAMMAD TAQI USMANI

The Author is:

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THE DOCTRINES OF CHRISTIANITY

CHAPTER 1

DEFINITION OF CHRISTIANITY

The Encyclopaedia Britannica defines Christianity as follows:

> "The Religion that traces its origin to Jesus of Nazareth, whom it affirms to be the chosen one (Christ) of God".

This definition of Christianity is very brief. Alfred A. Garvie has amplified this definition. In the article on Christianity in the Encyclopaedia Of Religion and Ethics, he writes as follows:

> "We may define Christianity as the ethical, historical, universal, monotheistic, redemptive religion, in which the relation of God and man is mediated by the person and work of the Lord Jesus Christ".

He thereafter explains each part of the definition in detail.

According him "Ethical" religion means that religion which prayers and offerings are not made to obtain earthly boons (such as food, health, safety, etc.) but, above all, its sole object is to attain spiritual perfection and the pleasure of God.

By "Historical" religion, he means that religion in which the pivot of thought and action is ceantered in a historical personality -- that is, Jesus (Isa عليه السلام). It is his word and act that has final authority in Christianity.

"Universal" in his view means that Christianity is not confined to specific race or nation -- but that its message is universal.

He defines Christianity as "Monotheistic" because, in spite of its belief in three Persons, God is said to be one. He writes:

> "Although in popular belief and speech the Christian Doctrine of the Trinity, or preferably tri-unity, has often come perilously near Tritheism, yet Christianity is essentially monotheistic, maintaining the Unity of God as a cardinal Doctrine".

The final feature of Christianity in the above definition is said to be its belief in redemption. In explaining this part of the definition, Garvie [1] writes:

> "The followship between God and man is admitted to be interrupted by sin, and man must be redeemed to be restored to this fellowship. In this redemption, Christ alone is the mediator".

This is a brief definition of Christianity. In reality, however, the correct understanding of a religion cannot be obtained unless one properly understands its cardinal doctrines. We shall, accordingly, explain each of these doctrines separately and in detail.

The Conception of God in Christianity

In so far as the nature of God is concerned, Christianity does not differ in this regard from other religions. It also ascribes to God substantially the same attributes as does other religions. Maurice Relton [2] writes:

> "The Christian conceives of God as a living being possessed of all possible perfections, or attributes. He is one capable of being apprehended though not comprehended, by the finite human mind. A full and exact analysis, therefore, of his essence is beyond the power of our intelligence. What he is in himself is unknown, save so far as his own self-disclosure has revealed it, generally in his relation to mankind, and specifically, in his revelation of himself in the person of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ."

The Doctrine of Trinity

Until this point, the matter is clear. Further on, however,

1. Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics, p. 581.
2. Relton, p.3.

the Christian explanation of the conception of God is extremely ambiguous and difficult to understand. Even the layman knows that God according to Christianity is composed of three Persons: Father, Son and Holy Spirit. This doctrine of God is known as the doctrine of Trinity. In elucidating and interpreting this doctrine, however, the views of the Christian scholars themselves are so divided and contradictory that it is extremely difficult to arrive with certainty at one conclusion. Who are the three Persons whose unity, according to Christians, is God? There is itself a difference of opinion in their identification. Some say that God is the totality of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit [3]. Others are of the view that the Father, Son and Virgin Mary (Maryam) are the three Persons whose unity represents God. Then, what is the individual status of each of these three Persons, and what is their relationship to the whole God which is referred to as Trinity? In answer to this question also, there are great differences of opinion. One group is of the opinion that each of the three person is God just as the whole is God. Another group is of the view that each of the three separately is God, but when compared to the whole each has a lesser status and the word "God" has been used for each in a slightly wider sense [4]. The third group is of the opinion that each of the three is not God, but that God is only the whole (trinity).

Unity in Three

In any event there are innumerable differences of opinion with the result that the doctrine of Trinity has become a "nightmare". We shall present that interpretation and explanation of this doctrine which appears to be generally accepted by Christians. In the word of the Encyclopaedia Britannica, the interpretation is as follows:

"The Christian doctrine of the Trinity can be best

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3. This view represents the belief of the majority of Christians - see Encyclopaedia Britannica, article entitled Trinity, vol. 22, p. 487.

4. Aquinas, vol. 1, p. 327.

> expressed in the words: 'The Father is God; the Son is God, and the Holy Ghost is God, and yet they are not three Gods but one God... for like as we are compelled by the Christian unity to acknowledge every Person by himself to be God and Lord, so we are forbidden by the Catholic religion to say that there are three Gods or three Lords."

In explaining this, the well known theologian and philosopher of the 3rd Century (A.D.), Saint Augustine writes in his famous book On The Trinity as follows:

> "All those Catholic expounders of the Divine Scriptures, both old and new, whom I have been able to read, who have written before me concerning the Trinity, who is God, have purposed to teach, according to the Scriptures, this Doctrine, that the Father, and the Son and the Holy Spirit intimate a divine unity of one and the same substance in an indivisible equality; and therefore that they are not three Gods, but one God: although the father hath begotten the Son, and so he who is the Father is not the son; and the Son is begotten by the Father, and so he who is the Son is not the Father, and the Holy Spirit is neither the Father nor the Son, but only the Spirit of the Father and the Son, himself also co-equal with the Father and the Son, and pertaining to the unity of the Trinity. Yet, not that this Trinity was born of the virgin Mary, and crucified under Pontius Pilate, and buried, and rose again the third day, and ascended into heaven, but only the son. Nor, again, that this Trinity descended in the form of a dove upon Jesus when he was baptized; nor that, on the 5 day of of Pentecost, after the ascension of the Lord, when 'There came a sound from heaven, as of a rushing wind 'the same Trinity 'Sat upon each of them with cloven tongues like as of fire 'But only the Holy Spirit. Nor yet that this Trinity said from heaven, 'Thou art my Son 6, 'Whether when he was baptized by John, or when the three Disciples were with him in the mount, or when the voice sounded, saying, 'I have both glorified it, and will glorify it again;' but that it was a word of the Father only, spoken to the son; although the Father, and the Son and the Holy Spirit, as they are indivisible, so work indivisibly. This is also my faith, since it is the catholic faith." 7

What is the basis of permissibility in the eyes of

1. MATT. III, P. 16. 6. MARK I.II. 7. AUGUSTINE, VOL. 2. P. 672.

Christians for regarding three as one, and one as three? Before dealing with the answer to this question, we must understand the meaning of Father, Son and the Holy Spirit in Christianity.

Father

The meaning of father according to Christians is the substance of God alone without any reference to attributes of speech and life. This essence in relation to the existence of the Son enjoys the status of the principle. According to the interpretation of the well known Christian philosopher St. Thomas Aquinas, the meaning of father is not that he has begotten anybody, or such a time has passed in which there was the father and not the son, but that this is divine terminology -- whose purpose is simply that the father is the principle of the son just as the substance is the principle of the attribute. Otherwise, since the time the father was in existence, the son was also in existence, and neither of them enjoys any priority in time over the other [8].

Why is the essence of God reference to as the father? In answering this question, Alfred A. Garvie [9] writes that :

> "In relation to man, God is father by which is meant not merely man's creaturely dependence on God, or personal affinity to God, but God's love to man, and his purpose to bring man into fellowship of love with himself".

Son

The meaning of "son" according to Christianity is the word of God. This is however not similar to the word of human beings. In distinguishing between the word of God and the word of man, Aquinas [10] writes :

> "In human nature the word is not something subsistent, and hence it is not properly called begotten or son. But the divine word is something subsistent in the divine nature; and hence he is properly and not metaphorically called son, and his principle is called fat her".

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8. Aquinas, vol. 1, p. 324.
9. Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics, p. 596.
10. Aquinas, vol. 1, p. 326.

According to Christian belief, the knowledge of God to what ever extent is obtained through this attribute, and all things are created by means of this attribute. This attribute like the father is eternal and ancient [11]. It was this attribute of God which became incarnate in the person of Jesus Christ because of which he was reterred to as the son of God. The doctrine of incarnation enjoys a specific status and we shall therefore deal with it in detail later. (*Insha Allah*).

Holy Spirit

The meaning of the Holy Spirit the attributes of life and love of the father and son. That is to say, the essence of God (father) loves by means of these attributes its attribute of knowledge (son), and the son likewise loves the fat her. These attributes, like the attribute of Word, exist in substance, and are eternal and everlasting as the father and son. For this reason, the Holy Spirit enjoys the status of a separate person.

According to Christian belief, these attributes (Holy Spirit) descended on Jesus in the form of a dove when he was baptized (Matthew: 3:16). Thereafter, when Jesus was raised to heaven, this very Holy Spirit descended in the form of tongues as of fire on the disciples of Jesus on the day of Pentecost.

In short, therefore "Tri-Unity" means that God comprises of three persons: the essence of God referred to as the father; the attribute of the word of God referred to as the son; and the attributes of life and love of God referred to as the Holy Spirit. Of these three, each one is God. However, the three together are not three Gods but only one God.

The Unity of Three and One

The question arises here: How can God remain one when the father, the son and the Holy Spirit are each believed to be God? They must necessarily be three.

11. Augustine, vol. 2, p. 168.

This question has since the beginning of Christianity until the present day been a riddle. Great Christian thinkers have attempted to solve the riddle in different forms and ways. There arose on this basis numerous sects. In truth, however, no rationally acceptable answer to the question was offered. Professor Maurice Relton in his excellent work "Studies in Christian Doctrine" has in a stimulating discussion dealt with the solutions offered by various sects, more specifically at the end of the second century and the beginning of the third century of the Christian era.

When the Ebionite sect emerged to solve this problem, they took up the cudgels at the first step - they stated that, in believing Jesus Christ ('Isa عليه السلام) to be God, they could not preserve the belief in the unity of God. Accordingly, it must be said that he was not completely and fully God. He could be regarded as the resemblance of God, or the image of God's character. However, it could not be said that in essence and substance he was God as the father was.

This sect in attempting to resolve the issue struck at the basis and foundation of Christianity. for that reason, the Church openly opposed it and declared its adherents innovators and heretics. In the result, this solution to the problem was not worthy of acceptance.

A group of Ebionites themselves emerged and asserted that the divinity of Christ ('Isa عليه السلام) must not be so openly denied - he must be believed to be God. But in order to avoid the slander of polytheism, it must be said that in essence the father only was God. However, the doctrine of trinity was also correct because the father had conferred divine status on the son and the Holy Spirit.

This theory also was opposed to the doctrinal principles of the Church because the Church believed the son to be of one substance or essence as that of the father. Hence, this sect was also declared heretic and the matter remained unresolved as before.

A third sect known as Patripassianism sprung up. Its foremost proponents were Praxeas, Noetus, Zephyrinus and Callistus. They presented a new philosophy in order to resolve the problem. They asserted that the father and son were not separate and distinct persons, but were modes or manifestations of one person to whom separate names were given. In reality, God was the father. He in relation to his essence is eternal and immortal. He is imperceptible to Man, and not subject to human needs and wants. In view of the fact, however, that he is God, and nobody can stop God's will, it follows that he may at any time by his will assume the human character and be subject to human wants and needs. And, if he wills, he may be visible to people by manifesting himself as Man. To the extent that, if he wills at any time, he may die before people. Consequently, on one occasion God willed that he apear in the form of Man. Accordingly, he appeared bodily in the world as Jesus Christ ('Isa عليه السلام) and became visible to men. The Jews brought untold hardships on him to the extent that they crucified him one day. Hence, Jesus Christ or the son, is not in reality a separate person, but he is the father who in assuming human form called himself the son [12].

It is clear that although on the one hand this philosophy to a degree solved the problem of "The Unity of Three and One", it raised on the other hand a number of unsolvable problems. Moreover, this sect did not assist the teachings of the Church which decreed the father and son to be distinct and separate persons. Accordingly, the sect was rejected and declared heretic. And the problem still remained unsolved.

There were other attempts on the part of the heretical sects to solve this problem. But, all of these were not worthy of acceptance because they in some way or the other violated the accepted principles and teachings of the Church.

The question is: how did the Roman Catholic Church

12. Relton, p. 61.

itself solve this problem? Our research reveals that the majority of Roman Catholic theologians have openly refused to solve this riddle, and have asserted that "Three in One and One in Three" is a mystery which we are unable to understand. Some theologians have attempted to present a rational interpretation to the doctrine of trinity [13]. In regard to Indian priests who propagated Christianity for the duration of the previous century in the Indo-Pak continent - it appears after considering their arguments that by virtue of their distance from the seat of Christianity, they could not fully understand the detailed teachings of Christianity. We shall give only one example to show the extent of their understanding of Christianity. Reverend "*Quaimuddin*" wrote a small booklet known as "*Takshifut Taslis*" in order to explain the doctrine of trinity. The booklet was published in Lahore Pakistan in 1972. In giving an example of the doctrine of trinity, he writes therein:

> If the composition of the human body is reflected on, then also it is made up of its own species, that is, material parts - whose united form could be viewed from a material level. for example, the bone, flesh and blood - by reason of their intergration, the human body remains in existence. If one of the three is missing, the completion of the structure of the human body cannot be conceived".

The reverend has in the above statement attempted to establish that just as the existence of man is composed of three parts - flesh, bone and blood, the existence of God is similarly (May God forbid!) composed of three persons. It is clear that the Reverend understands that the "three persons" in Christianity means three parts. And just as

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13. Some Indian theologians assert that the doctrine of trinity is part of the Mutashabihat and Muqattaat of the Qur'an. This is a misconception. Firstly, because the Mutashabihat are verses whose comprehension are not necessary for an understanding of the cardinal principles, or for acting on any precept, order, command or prohibition. All of this is crystal clear. As opposed to this, the doctrine of trinity is cardinal and fundamental to salvation. To treat it as part of Mutashabihat means that we are obliged to believe in something which is beyond the dictates of reason. Secondly, because Christians say that the apparent meaning of the doctrine is intended, although they do not have the supporting proof. Whereas, the Mutashabihat, whilst not comprehensible, are still not contrary to reason. (summary - translator).

each thing which comprises of parts is in totality one, the essence of God despite being composed of three persons is in like manner one. Whereas, Christianity does not believe the three persons to be three parts. On the contrary, it decrees them to be three distinct and separate persons each having separate substance and existence. For this reason, it has left out the word "Parts" for the father, son and holy spirit and has chosen the word "Person". The existence of man is undoubtedly composed of flesh, bone and blood. However, nobody refers to only flesh, or only to bone, as man, but refers to them as part of man. As opposed to this, Christianity declares each of the father, the son and the Holy Spirit God - and does not believe in each as a part of God [14].

The purpose of presenting this example was only to show that Indian priests in seeking to prove trinity by means of rational arguments are themselves obvious of the detailed teachings of their religion. Accordingly, we shall disregard their arguments in this work, and shall discuss and analyse the views of early Christian theologians and thinkers in this regard. As far as our research reveals, the most comprehensive and detailed treatise written on this subject is that by the well known theologian and philosopher of the 3rd Century, Saint Augustine. Later scholars have drawn heavily on his work. The English translation of his work was rendered by A.W. Haddan and was published under the title "On The Trinity". It forms part of those writings of St. Augustine which have been collected and published in New York in 1948 under the title "Basic Writings of St. Augustine."

A large part of this work is devoted to scriptural discussion. Towards the end, however, Augustine has, in endeavouring to prove. "The Unity of Three and One" view reason adduced certain examples. We shall present a synopsis of these examples below.

14. If Christianity believed in the three as parts of God, then the explanation offered by Reverend "Qaimuddin" would be correct. The fact that the belief in God as comprising of parts is contrary to reason and the principle of et ernity, according to other proofs, is a separate issue.

Proof of Trinity by means of the Example of the Mind

The first example presented by Augustine is that the mind of Man is a means or instrument of knowledge. Generally, the knower, the thing known and the instrument of knowledge are three separate things. If one has the knowledge of the existence of Zaid, one is the knower, Zaid is the person or thing known; and one's mind is the instrument of knowledge. To illustrate :

KNOWER (Person who knows) -- ONESELF
KNOWN (Person who is known) -- ZAID
INSTRUMENT OF KNOWLEDGE
(Means by which Person is Known) -- MIND

In addition, one's mind itself has knowledge of its existence. In such a situation, the mind is the knower, and is also itself the instrument of knowledge; because the mind acquired knowledge of itself through itself. This may be illustrated as follows:

KNOWER (Person or thing who Knows)............. MIND
KNOWN (Person or thing who is Known)............ MIND
INSTRUMENT (Means by which
Person or Thing is Known)................................ MIND

It will be noted in this example that the knower, the known and the instrument of knowledge, although in reality three separate things, have become one. The knower, the known and the instrument of knowledge - each has a separate existence. But, in the second example, the three become one. Now, if anybody asks who is the knower?, the answer will be the mind. If somebody asks, who is the known?, the answer also will be the mind; and if somebody asks, what is the instrument of knowledge?, the answer again will be the mind. Whereas, the mind is one. The truth of the matter is simply that the mind possesses three qualities - each of the three qualities could be referred to as the mind, but one cannot on this basis say that the mind

is three.

Augustine says that God is similarly an expression of three persons. Each one of the three is God; but this does not necessarily mean that God is three, but He is in fact one.

In presenting this example, Augustine has shown great ingenuity. On fair reflection, however the problem is not resolved by means of this example; because the mind is in the example in fact one and it s trinity is predicated and not real. Whereas, Christianity believes in both the unity of God and trinity as being real.

This may be explained as follows: the mind in the above example has three aspects; from one aspects, it is the knower, from the second aspect, the known; and from the third, the means or instrument of knowledge. But from the viewpoint of external existence, the three are one.

The external confirmation of the knower is the same mind which is the external confirmation of the known and the instrument of knowledge. It is not so that the mind that is the knower possesses a separate existence; and the mind that is the known has another separate existence; and the mind that is the instrument of knowledge has a third existence. But, the father, son and Holy Spirit in christianity are not merely existences. The external existence of the father is separate; that of the son is separate; and so is that of the Holy Spirit separate. These three external existences are, with regard to their effect, entirely separate and distinct. Augustine himself writes in the beginning of his book:

> "Yet not that this Trinity was born of the Virgin Mary, and crucified under Pontius Pilate, and buried and rose again the third day, and ascended into heaven, but only the son, nor again that this Trinity descended in the form of a dove upon Jesus when he was baptized;... but only the Holy Spirit not yet that this

> Trinity said from heaven "thou art my son . when he was baptized... but that it was a word of the father only..." 15.

It is manifestly clear form this statement that the Christian belief in the father, son and Holy Spirit is not merely predicated, but is premised on each of the three having real, distinct and separate existence. On the other hand, the knower, known and instrument of knowledge, in the example set out above, do not each have a real and distinct existence; but, are three predicated aspects of one real existence. No intelligent person would say that the mind as knower possesses a separate existence; the mind as the known possesses a second separate existence; and the mind as the instrument of knowledge has a third separate existence; and notwithstanding the three are one. whereas the gist of the doctrine of trinity is that the father has a distinct and separate substance; the son has another distinct and separate substance; and the Holy Spirit distinct substance; and, in spite of this, the three are one.

In short , the claim of Christianity is that both the unity of God and the three persons of the trinity are real. But, in the example offered by Augustine, the unity is real but the number is not - it is predicated. Hence, the real unity of three and one is not established by means of the example. In regard to the large number of attributes in the single existence of God, there is no controversy whatsoever. All religions believe that God despite being one has many attributes. He is most merciful; the subduer; the knower of the unseen; the omnipotent - in this way, He has many attributes which do not in the least affect his unity. Accordingly, nobody says that the God which is most merciful is distinct and different; the God t hat is the subduer is also distinct; and the omnipotent God is something else. As opposed to this, the Christian faith asserts that the father separately is very God; the son is also separately very God; and so is the Holy Spirit a very

15. Augustine, vol. 2, p. 672.

God. And, despite this, these three are not three gods but one God.

Second Example

Augustine has similarly presented another example. He says that the mind of every man loves its quality of knowledge; and it has knowledge of this love; hence, it is in relation to its knowledge the lover; and in relation to love the knower; that is to say:

the mind........ in relation to its knowledge..........the lover
the mind........ in relation to its love.....................the knower.

Consequently, there are three things: the mind, the lover and the knower - and these three things are one; because the lover is the mind; the knower is the mind; and the mind itself. In the same way, God has three persons: the essence of God (the father), his attribute of knowledge (the son), an his at tribute of love (the Holy Spirit). And these three are one God.

This example is also based on the error that the mind is one essence and the lover and the knower are its two attributes which do not have any real and separate existence of their own. As opposed to this, the father according to Christian doctrine is one essence; and the attribute of the word (the son) and that of love (the Holy Spirit) are two such attributes that possess their own separate substantial existence in reality. Hence, the unity is real in the example of the mind; and the situation of a predicated number is rationally possible. And, in the doctrine of trinity, despite the reality of number, the reality of unity is claimed - and this is rationally impossible.

If the belief the Christian faith were that God is one essence and that his attributes of word and love did not have, apart from God, a separate real existence, then the example would be correct. In such case, there would be no difference of opinion on the issue between Islam and Christianity. The problem arises when the Christian faith decrees the attributes of love as having separate

substantial existence. It believes in each of the three as God, and despite this, asserts that the three are not three gods. This can in no way whatsoever be reconciled with the example of the mind above. Because in the example the knower and the lover do not have a separate existence from the mind. Whereas, the son and the Holy Spirit in Christianity posses their own separate existence apart from the fat her.

Augustine made these two examples the basis of rational discussion. Both examples, however, as noted, are wrong, and do not in fact support the doctrine of trinity.

* * *



CHAPTER 2

THE CHRISTIAN TEACHING RELATING TO JESUS CHRIST

The gist of the Christian teaching relating to Jesus Christ is that the word of God (that is, the person of the son) became incarnate in the human being of Jesus Christ for the sake of the well-being of men. As long as Jesus Christ stayed in the world, this divine person or substance remained incarnate within him. To the extent that the Jews crucified him whereupon the divine person or substance separated from his body. Then, three days after, he became alive for the second time and was shown to his disciples; he gave them advice and guidance whereafter he ascended to Heaven. The Jews cruficied him and thereby that sin of all Christians was forgiven which was committed by Adam and had passed into their nature at birth. This doctrine has four basic parts, namely :

1. INCARNATION
2. CRUCIFIXION
3. RESURRECTION
4. REDEMPTION

We shall deal with each part in sufficient detail.

Incarnation

The doctrine of incarnation appears first in the book of John. The author of this book refers to the beginning of Jesus Christ in the following words:

> "In the beginning was the word, and the word was with God, and the word was God. He was in the beginning

> with God". (John 1-3)

And further on he writes :

> "And the word became flesh and dwelt among us, full of grace and truth; we have beheld his glory, glory as of the only son from the father". (John 14-15)

We have already stated that the "word" in Christianity refers to the person of the son of God - who himself is God. Accordingly, the meaning of the statement of John is that the word of God - that is, the person of the son - became incarnate and appeared in the form of Jesus. In explaining this doctrine, Maurice Relton writes: [16]

> "The Catholic Doctrine maintains that he who was God, without ceasing to be what he was, became man, i.e. entered into the conditions of our finite existence in time and space and dwelt amongst us".

According to Christians, the power that unified the person of the son with the human existence of Jesus is the Holy Spirit. We have stated earlier that the meaning of the Holy Spirit in Christianity is the attribute of the love of God. Hence, the meaning of this doctrine is that because God loved his servants, he therefore, through his attribute of love sent the person of the son to this world - so that, he may become the redeemer of the original sin of men.

It must be borne in mind that the incarnation of the son into Jesus Christ does not mean according to Christians that the son gave up divinity and became man. But the meaning is that he was previously only God, and now also became man. Hence, in accordance with this doctrine, Jesus was simultaneously both man and God. Alfred Garvey expresses this in the following words : [17]

> "Jesus was both Man and God at the same time. The denial of one or both of these natures in the one person had given rise to a number of heretical sects. Athanasius strongly defended this theory against Arius. Hence, the accepted formula was the unity of the two natures in the one person of Christ".

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16. Relton, p. 28. 17. Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics, p. 586.

From the human viewpoint, Jesus was of lower rank than God. For this reason, he stated the following:

> "...For the Father is greater than I" (John 14:28)

And, it is in this respect that he was subject to human conditions and needs. But, from the viewpoint of divinity, he was equal to God, the Father. Hence, the Gospel of John writes:

> "I and the Father are one" (John 10:30)

Augustine writes : [18]

> "In the form of God he made man; in the form of a servant, he was made man"

Moreover, Augustine writes to this extent :

> "For he did not so take the form of a servant as that he should lose the form of God, in which he was equal to the father. Is there anyone who cannot perceive that he himself in the form of God is also greater than himself, but yet like wise in the form of a servant less than himself?"

The question arises here. How is it possible that one person be both man and God; creator and created, high and low? This question also like the doctrine of trinity became the centre of debate and controversy over the centuries. In answer thereto, books were written to the extent that the foundation was laid for a separate science known as Christology.

In regard to the Roman Catholic Church, it bases its argument in answer to this question on mainly different verses from the gospel of John. As if in its view, this doctrine is established by means of what has been transmitted [19]. As for reason, and in order to bring the doctrine of incarnation closer to human understanding, this church presents certain examples. Some assert that the

18. Augustine, vol. 2, p. 678.

19. The details of these arguments, and a refutation thereof, are the with in the third chapter of the book "Izharul Haq" written by the well known scholar Allama Kiranwi.

unity of "God" and "Man" is like an engravement in a ring. Others say that the analogy is like the reflection of a person in a mirror. So, just as the engravement and the ring are two things in one existence or substance, and just as the mirror and reflection are two things in one existence or substance, the person of Jesus was incarnated into human existence in like manner. For this reason, there are two realities in his personality at the same time - one of God and one of man. Most Christian thinkers have however not accepted these arguments [20].

We present a summary below of the solutions offered by different Christian thinkers to this question after the attempt of the Roman Catholic Church.

Those who Deny the Divinity of Christ

Amongst them, is the group, which, despairing in answering the question, stated that the belief in the divinity of Jesus is false. He was simply human and accordingly the question itself does not arise.

James Makinon has in his excellent work "From Christ to Constantine" dealt with the views of these thinkers in fair detail. According to him, the founder - leaders of this school were Paul of Samosata [21] and Lucian [22]. He writes: [23]

> "Both held that Christ was a creature, but while Paul of Samosata conceived of him as a mere man in whom the impersonal divine wisdom or logos manifested it self, Lucian and his school regarded him as a heavenly being who was created by God out of nothing, in whom the divine logos becomes personal,

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20. Because the engravement in a ring, despite its apparent attachment, is nevertheless a separate thing. Hence, the ring cannot be called the engravemen; and vice versa. Whereas, on the contrary, Christians assert that, after the incarnation, Christ was God, and God became man. Similarly, the reflection of John is separate from the mirror itself. The mirror cannot be called John, or vice-versa. As opposed to this, Christians allege t hat Jesus is God, and God is man. The examples therefore are inappropriate and incaccurate.

21. He was Bishop of Antioch from 260 to 272 A.D.

22. Lucian is a well known Christian t heologian, who devoted his life to ascetism. His theories are between that of Arius and Paul of Samosata. Born in Samosata, he spent most of his life in Antioch. (Britannica).

23. Mackinon, p.

> who, at the incarnation, assumed a human body, but not a human soul, and whose mission it was to reveal the father. But he was not God in the absolute sense and was not eternal".

So, Paul of Samosata denied the doctrine of incarnation at inception. He stated that the meaning of incarnation of God in the being of Christ is only that God conferred on him a specific intellect. Lucian on the other hand did not deny the doctrine of incarnation. He accepted that the attribute of knowledge of God was incarnated into Jesus Christ but that this incarnation did not make Jesus God, Creator, eternal and everlasting - and that despite such incarnation, God remained creator and Jesus created as before.

Arius, the well known Christian thinker of the fourth century, influenced by the theories of Paul and Lucian, fought a great battle against the church of his time and caused an outcry in the then Christian world. The substance of his theory in the words of Makinon is as follows : [24]

> Arius on the contrary insisted that God alone is eternal and has no equal; that he created the son out of nothing; that the son is, therefore, not eternal, nor is God eternally the father, since there was (a time) when the son was not; that he is of a different substance from the father and is subject to change; that he is not truly God, though he was capable of perfection and became a perfect creature - the logos in a real human body. Christ is thus for him a secondary deity or demi God, who partakes, in a certain measure, of the qualities of both, the divine and the human, but is not God in the highest sense".

When Arius propounded his theories, it was widely accepted especially by the Eastern church.

However, the central churches of Antioch and Alexandria were ruled by Alexander, Athanasius and the

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24. Mackinon, p.

like, who were not willing to accept any solution to the problem which touched on the divinity of Jesus or affected the doctrine of incarnation. consequently, when Emperor Constantine convened the Council of Nicaea in 323 AD, the theories and views of Arius were not only strongly rejected but Arius himself was sent into exile.

Paulician Sect

Thereafter, and in the fifth century AD there emerged the Paulician sect, which held a middle view in regard to Jesus Christ. The sect assert ed that Jesus was not God but an angel. God sent him to the world so that he may reform it. Consequently, he was born in human form from the womb of Virgin Mary. And because God conferred on him His specific glory and majesty, he was called the son of God. the influence of this sect remained mainly in the regions of Asia Minor and Armenia. However, this sect did not receive general acceptance, because of the absence of scriptural evidence relating to Jesus being an angel.

The Nestorian Sect

In the middle of the fifth century AD there arose the Nestorian sect whose leader was Nestorius (died in 451 AD). In attempting to solve this problem, it presented a new philosophy, namely that, all difficulties that face the doctrine of incarnation - are based on the premise of the one person of Jesus consisting of two natures or realities - one human, the other divine. Nestorius said that Jesus being God is true, and his being human is also true. But he did not accept that Jesus was one person who unified both natures within himself. The truth is that the essence of Jesus consisted of two persons, the one son, the other, God - the one, the son of God, the other the son of Adam. The son was very God, and Jesus was very man.

The formula of the Roman Catholic Church was "one person and two realities or natures". Conversely the

formular of Nestorius was "Two persons and two natures or realities". consequently, this theory was condemned at a council of all Churches convened at Ephesus in 431 AD with the result that Nestorius was imprisoned and exiled. His followers were declared heretics. Despite this, the sect still exists to this day [25]. The crime committed by Nestorius is summarized by Dr. Bethune-Baker in the following words:

> "That he so distinguished between the Godhead and the Manhood of our Lord as to treat them as separate personal existences... He held the word to be a person distinct from Jesus, and the son of God, distinct from the son of Man....!"

Jacobite Church

In the sixth century AD, there arose the Jacobite Church whose influence remains up to today in Syria and Iraq. Its leader was Jacabus Baradeus. Its teaching was completely contrary to that of Nestorius and Arius. Nestorius established in relation to the existence of Jesus "Two natures" together with "two persons". Jacabus asserted that Jesus was not merely one person but also possessed one nature - which was divine. He was only God, although he appears to us in the form of man. The teachings of this sect are explained in the Encyclopaedia as follows:

> "Those who hold t he doctrine that Christ had but one composite nature".

Apart from Jacabus Bernadeus other sects also adopted this teaching. Such sects were called Monophysites and were prominent until the seventh century AD [26].

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25. Some scholars of recent times such as Dr. Bethune Baker were of the view that the charges against Nestorius were without foundation and that his theories were not properly understood. But, Prof. Relton and other have refuted this and have supported the decision of the Council of Ephese. See Studies in Christian Doctrine, op cit, p. 102.

26. This was the early period of Islam. At that time, this sect was the centre of controversy throughout the entire Christian world. In consequence, there was great unrest in Syria and other places - see Encyclopaedia Britannica, vol. 15, p. 830. It is clear therefore that the Quran probably refers to these sects in the verse: "Undoubtedly, those are unbelievers who say that Allah is Masih ibn Maryam."

The Final Interpretation

The above discussion clearly reveals the different attempts of Christian thinkers to explain and rationalize the doctrine of incarnation. But, we have seen that each attempt was subversive and contrary to the teachings of the Roman Catholic Church. Accordingly, the theologians of this Church declared such attempts as heretical. There remains therefore the answer to the original question. The orthodox held that the doctrine of incarnation is also mystery and must be believed as such - its comprehension is not possible. (See Encyclopaedia Britannica)

This view did not appeal to the objective mind. Accordingly, an interpretation of the doctrine of incarnation was offered in recent times with a view to justifying it rationally. The feature of this interpretation is that it accords with the teaching of the Roman Catholic Church on the subject. Although this interpretation was given by some of the early Christian thinkers, Professor Maurice Relton has explained it clearly in the following words:

> "Such an incarnation is conceivable, if we remember that the way had been paved for it from the first creation of man in the divine image [27]. This means that there is a human element in God from all eternity, and this human element had been imperfectly reflected in created form in the sons of men. The truly human is the humanity of God; the merely or purely human is the humanity of man - a created and imperfect humanity which can never become anything but human, no matter how fully indwelt it may be by the divine. When, therefore, God became man, the humanity he exhibited was not a created humanity, such as ours is, but the truly human such as God alone possesses, and in the likeness of which we are made... This means ultimately that the humanity of Jesus Christ was not the humanity we know in ourselves. It was God's humanity, which differs from ours to the extent to which the creator differs from the creature".

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27. The reference is to the verse of the Bible: "So God created man in his own image..." (Gen. 1.27).

In short, according to this interpretation, although two realities were united in the one person of Jesus - the divine and the human - the human itself was a divine humanity and not the humanity of men. Hence, there is no objection to both being present at one time.

This interpretation is according to Professor Relton most acceptable rationally and free from objection. And, it is not subversive to Catholic teaching.

But, what is the weight of this interpretation? Scholars may understand this! [28].

The Crucifixion

The second belief of the Christians in regard to Jesus is that he was crucified by the Jews by order of Pontius Pilate with the result that he died. In this regard, it must be borne in mind that the punishment of crucifixion according to the majority of Christen sects was not meted out to the person of the son - who was according to them God - but it was given to the human manifestation of the person of the son, namely Jesus who was not God in his human capacity but only a created being.

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28. This interpretation is based on the premise that God possesses a perfect humanity since eternity. But the question arise: What is this "humanity of God?" Does this humanity consist of elements such as hunger, thirst, happiness, sadness which are found in us? If such elements are found in God, then (may God forbid) it means that God is also subject to hunger and thirst; hardship and rest; and all the elements of time and space. It is clear that this is patently false. And the Roman Catholic Church also does not hold such a belief. If therefore Jesus was free of all these elements and needs, then the question is, Why did Jesus possess these elements?Why was he subject to hunger andd thirst? Why was he subject to sadness? Why did he scream of (according to Christians) pain at the tie of crucifixion?, when his humanity accordding to Maurice Relton was not like ours, but was a divine humanity which was free of all elements and human needs.

Then, the interpretation, in holding that man was created in the "Divine Image", states a peculiar meaning to this, namely th at, God had from the beginning a human element which was reflected into man. Whereas if indeed the words of the Book of Genesis are Divinely inspired, then at most the meaning of those words are that God conferred on man knowledge and perception; the ability to distinguish between right and wrong; and gave him the power of both good and evil. Catholic theologians themselves have explained this to be the meaning of the verse. St. Augustine in his famous work, 'The City of God', writes: "Thus God made man in his own image, by creating for him a soul of such a kind that because of it he surpassed all living creatures on earth, in the sea and in the sky, in virture of reason and intelligence: for no other creature had a mind like that." (Book 12: Chap. 24)

The Holy Cross

In view of the fact that the sign of the cross (+) is of great importance by virtue of the doctrine of crucifixion, we refer briefly to its position which is not without interest [29].

Until the fourth century AD, this sign had no collective significance. It is popularly reported that emperor Constantine saw (probably in his dream) in 312 AD, during battle, the sign of a cross in the sky. Thereafter, in 326 AD his mother, St. Helena found a cross. The people were of the view that this cross was the one on which Jesus (according to the Christian claim) had been crucified. In commemoration of this story, Christians celebrate each year in May a day known as "The Finding of the Cross". Thereafter, the sign of the cross became the symbol of the Christian faith. Christians accordingly began to use the sign in all their doings. The well known Christian Theologian Tertullian writes:

> "At each journey and progress, at each coming in and going out, at the putting on of shoes, at the bath, at meals, at the kindling of lights, at bedtime, at sitting down, whatsoever occupation engages us, we mark the brow with this sign of the cross."

Why is the cross holy in Christianity? - When according to Christian belief it was the cause of harm to Jesus. We have not found the answer to this question in the writing of any Christian scholar. It appears that the basis of the sanctity of the cross is the doctrine of atonement. That is, because the cross is the cause of the forgiveness of sins, it is respect ed and sanctified.

Resurrection

The third belief of Christians relating to JESUS is that after his crucifixion and burial, he became alive again on the third day. He then gave his disciples advice and instruction whereafter he ascended to the heavens [30].

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29. See generally, Britannica.

30. The story of the resurrection is contained in detail in the bible. In view of the fact that Maulana Kiranwi رحمة الله عليه has proved the inconsistency and inaccuracy of this story in his book 'Izharul Haq', and has dealt with this doctrine in detail, it is pointless to deal with the subject in ddetail here.

The Atonement

The fourth and final belief relating to Jesus is the doctrine of atonement. For a number of reasons it is necessary to understand this doctrine in detail.

Firstly, this doctrine is at the heart of Christianity according to Daniel Wilson [31]; and in itself is most important because what has been discussed previously is really a preface to this doctrine.

Secondly, this doctrine by virtue of its intricacy has especially been the least understood in the non-Christian world.

Thirdly, by not understanding it fully, two evils have resulted. One is that Christian missionaries in our country have explained this doctrine as they wished, with the result that the unwary, ignorant of the truth, fell under a misconception; the other is that those who wrote in refutation of Christianity raised object ions to this doctrine which were inapplicable. The result was that such objections could not properly uphold the truth.

We shall accordingly deal with this doctrine in sufficient detail in what follows so as to avoid any doubt.

the Encyclopaedia Britannica has summarized this doctrine in the following words:

> "Atonement in Christian theology means the redemptive work of Christ, through which sinful man was made at one with, and reconciled to, God. It presupposes two truths, the fall of man from God's grace through Adam's sin, and the incarnation of the word of God to restore man to grace."

This in itself is too brief. The doctrine has behind it a long sequence of historical and theoretical assumptions. If these assumptions are not understood, the doctrine cannot

31. Wilson. vol. 2, p. 53.

be properly comprehended. These assumptions are as follows:

1. The first assumption is that Adam, the first human being, was given at the time of his creation all kinds of material comfort s and pleasures without restriction, save that he was prohibited from eating wheat. At that time his will was made entirely free whereby he could if he wished obey orders or oppose them.

2. Adam exercised this will wrongly. By eating the forbidden fruit, he became the perpetrator of a great sin. The sin itself appeared trivial. On the contrary, it was very serious having regard to its nature and magnitude. In regard to nature, because it was extremely easy at that time for Adam to observe the order of prohibition. After giving him absolute freedom of eating an abundant supply of foods, he was subject to only one prohibition which was very easy to observe. Apart from this, man at that time did not have the powers of passion and desire which could compel him to sin. Hence, it was not difficult t o stay away from wheat. And, the seriousness of violating the prohibition is in proportion to the ease with which it could have been observed and fulfilled. Furthermore, this was the first sin of man who instead of obedience committed disobedience. Prior to this, man did not sin, and just as, obedience is the tree of all good deeds, disobedience is the foundation of all sins. The sin of Adam laid this foundation.

This sin was from the viewpoint of magnitude very serious as it embraced many other sins with the result that it became the source or mother of sins. St. Augustine writes in this regard: [32]

"This one sin of man encompassed so many sins... In truth, if one reflects on the reality of any sin, he will see its reflection in this original sin."

32. Augustine, vol. 1, p. 684.

3. In view of the fact that the sin of Adam was extremely serious, it resulted in two consequences. The one is that as punishment for the sin, he became entitled to everlasting death or punishment. For God showed him the forbidden tree and told him:

> "...For in the day that you eat of it, you shall die" (Gen. 2:15)

The other consequence is that the free will that was given to Adam was taken away from him. He was previously given the power to do good or evil according to his will. But because he wrongly used this power, he was deprived thereof. Augustine writes: [33]

> "When man sinned by his free will, he was subdued by sin; hence his free will ended because 'whatever overcomes a man, to that he is enslaved.' ...Hence, he cannot acquire the will to do good until he is freed from sin and becomes the slave of good."

As if, and until he is not freed from the shackles of his sin, his free will remains terminated. Now, he is free to commit sins but not good deeds.

The questions arises here: Why has God in punishment for one sin caused men to be involved in other sins? In answer to this question, St. Thomas Aquinas writes:

> "Because when men are deprived of the help of divine grace, they are overcome by their passions. In this way sin is always said to be the punishment of a preceding sin."

4. In view of the fact that the free will of Adam and Eve ended after the commission of the sin - which meant that they were not free to do good; but were free to sin - it followed that the element of sin became embedded in their nature. In other words, their sin became their nature and constitution. This sin is referred to in technical terminology as the original sin.

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33. Augustine, vol. 1, p. 675.

5. The original sin was thereafter transmitted to posterity, born and to be born and to be born, because they were created from the loins of both (Adam and Eve). St. Augustine writes: [34]

"As happy, then, as were these our first parents... so happy should the whole human race have been, had they not introduced that evil which they have transmitted to their posterity... In truth, all men who are sullied by the original sin were born of Adam and Eve."

That is to say, every person who is born into the world is born with sin from time of birth because the original sin of his parents is embedded in his nature. The question is: the sin was committed by the parents - How did the children become sinners as a result thereof? John Calvin, the well known leader of the Protestant Church writes: [35]

"In reality, we have been infected by the disease of sin through Adam, and by reason of this sin, we are justly worthy of punishment."

Thomas Aquinas, the well known Roman Catholic theologian and philosopher explains this by means of another example: [36]

"That original sin, in virtue of the sin of our first parent, is transmitted to his posterity; just as from the soul's will actual sin is transmitted to the members of the body, through their being moved by the will".

6. Because all the children of Adam were trained by the original sin - and t he original sin itself is the tree of all sins - they like their parents were excluded from the exercise of free will, and became tainted by one sin after the other. To the extent that apart from the original sin, they were

34. Augustine, vol. 2, p. 633.
35. Quoted by Aquinas, p. 669.
36. Aquinas, vol. 2, p. 669.

afflicted by other sins which they commited by reason of the original sin.

7. By virtue of the above mentioned sins, the whole of mankind like their parents became entitled on the one hand to perpetual punishment. On the other hand, they became excluded from their own free will. Accordingly, there was no means to salvation and forgiveness because protection from such sins could only be attained by good deeds. But, by reason of the absence of free will, man could not do good deeds, which could save him from punishment.

8. One way of achieving deliverance from this problem was for God to shower mercy and forgive men. This however was not possible because God is just and fair and He will not break his immutable laws. In the Book of Genesis, to which we have previously referred, death was prescribed as the punishment for the original sin. Now, it would amount to a breach of the law of justice if man was forgiven without the imposition of the punishment of death.

9. God on the other hand is also merciful. He cannot leave His servants in this miserable state. Accordingly, He chose such a scheme whereby both mercy was extended to his servants and the law of justice remained untainted. The only legal course available was for man to die once as punishment, and thereafter, become alive for a second time. In this way, man's free will which ended prior to his death by reason of the original sin would be restored to him. And he would acquire freedom from the burden of the original sin and perform good deeds together with his freedom.

10. But, it is contrary to the laws of nature to make all human beings in the world die and thereafter cause them to come alive again. Hence, there was a need for one person who was free from the original sin to bear the burden of all the sins of men. God would give him once the

punishment of death and then give him life again. And his punishment would suffice for all mankind. Thereafter, all men would become free.

For this noble purpose, God chose his own "Son"; and sent him in human form and body to the world. He made this sacrifice by being crucified on the cross and thereby dying. This death became a redemption for man. In virtue of such death, not only the original sin of all men, but also all sins committed by reason of the original sin, was forgiven. Then this son became alive for the second time after three days whereby all men acquired a new life. In this new life, men became owner of the free will. If the free will was exercised in good deeds, he will be rewarded. If exercised in evil deeds, he would in accordance with the state of such deeds be punished.

11. But this sacrifice of Jesus is only for that person who has faith in Jesus, and who acts on his teachings. The sign of such faith is the fulfilment of the ritual of baptism. The undergoing of baptism signifies faith in the redemption of Jesus on the part of the baptized. Hence, being baptized through Jesus is deemed to take the place of his death and second life. Consequently, whoever undergoes baptism will have his original sin forgiven, and he will be given a new free will. On the other hand, that person who does not undergo baptism, his original sin remains with the result that he becomes entitled to perpetual sin. Aquinas therefore writes: [37]

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37. Aquinas, vol. 1. p. 714.

On the topic of Atonement, maulana Kiranwi رحمة الله عليه has at various places in Izh-arul Haq, more particularly in the third chapter, dealt comprehensively and fully with the topic. In any event discussions on each part of the doctrine would require a separate thesis. Because we are merely recounting and narrating Christian doctrines, there is therefore no leverage to embark on a detailed analytical discussion. However, we consider it necessary to make some basic points on this issue. As follows hereafter, which require judddgement thereon. If these points are borne in mind, the faults and errors of this doctrine will become clearly apparent.

Continue next page

"But original sin incurs everlasting punishment; since children who have died in original sin, because they have not been baptized, will never see the kingdom of God".

12. As for those who died prior to the coming of Jesus, it will be seen whether they believed in Jesus or not. If they believed in him, then the death of Jesus will also be a

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1. The first matter that requires examination and evidence is whether the error of Adam amounted to a sin or not?

2. Then the doctrine postulates two ways in transmitting the original sin: first, from Adam to all his childdren; and then secondly from the childdren to Jesus. The question arises, is there a place for the transposing of sin from one to another in the just law of God? In the old testament we read as follows: "The soul that sins shall die. The soul shall not suffer for the iniquity of the father, nor the father suffer the iniquity of the son; the righteousness of the righteous shall be upon himself, andd the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon himself." (Ezekiel: 18:20)

3. The example given by Calvin relating to the transmission of sin on the analogy of hereditary disease is incorrect. This is so because firstly the issue that disease is hereditary isitself debatble. Even if one accepts that diseases are hereditary, then sickness which is an involuntary affliction, cannot be compared and equatedd to sin. If a person is afflicted by sickness involuntarily, he cannot be blamed nor be the subject of punishment. So, why is man considered deserving of punishment by reason of this sin in which his will plays no part whatsoever?

4. Similarly, the example given by Aquinas is incorrect because the sinner is in fact man. But, once man is the name of the totality of spirit andd body, it follows that each one is a sinner. As opposed to this, the existence of Adam is not made up of all his children so that he cannot be called a sinner until all his children are declared sinners.

5. If the original sin was naturally transposed to all the children of Adam, then why was it not transposed into the human existence of Jesus? Whereas he was like all people born through the medium of women (Maryam), and according to Christian belief was together with being god also man. And he was crucified from the standpoint of being man.

6. Then, according to which dictates of justice is it justifiable to crucify a sinless and innocent soul, and that with his consent? If a person voluntarily offers in a court of law to undergo the bodily punishment due to a certain criminal, then will such a criminal be set free? The verses of Ezekiel quoted above refutes this.

7. It is said that God is just. Hence, He does not forgive sins without punishment. But, what justice is that which not only condemns all men to perpetual punishment by reason of an involuntary sin, but also usurps their free will.

8. It is said that God does not forgive the original sin simple by means of repentance whereas the old testament states: "But if a wicked man turns away from all his sins which he has committed and keeps all my statues does what is lawful and right, he shall surely live; he shall not die." (Ezekiel 18:20)

9. If the doctrine of atonement is true then why did Jesus not explain it clearly and properly? There is no verse of the old testament from which the doctrine could be inferred. We shall deal with this in the second part of this book in sufficient detail.

redemption for them and they will be saved. If they did not believe in him, they will not be saved.

13. As mentioned before, those who believed in Jesus and underwent baptism - for them redemption does not mean that they will not be punished for sins committed. but redemption means that their original sin will be forgiven, which sin demanded perpetual punishment. Moreover, all sins will be forgiven, whose cause is the original sin. Now, they will obtain a new life in which they will own a free will. If that will is wrongly exercised, then they will be punished according to the types of sin committed. If after baptism they commit a sin which takes them out of the pale of faith, they again become entitled to perpetual punishment. And, the redemption of Jesus in such case will not suffice. Accordingly, those declared by the church as heretic and excommunicated become entitled to perpetual punishment.

If one the other hand, they commit a minor sin, then they would be sent to that part of hell, which has been made to purify believers of their sins, for a temporary limited period. The name of such part is purgatory wherein they will stay for a while and then sent to paradise.

Some Christian theologians on the contrary assert that not only disbelief, but also major sins separate one from the redemption of Jesus. And, they become entitled to perpetual punishment. St. Augustine have written a specific book on this issue, and it appears from certain of his statements in the Enchiridion that he is inclined to this opinion.

Deniers of Redemption

This is a brief account of the doctrine of atonement. The overwhelming majority of Christians have from inception believed in Atonement as a cardinal doctrine of Christianity. Notwithstanding, there are people in the

history of the church who reject the doctrine. The first amongst these was probably Coelestius whose theories in the words of Augustine are as follows: [38]

> "The sin of Adam harmed Adam only; and did not affect mankind at all."

However, these theories were declared heretic by a Council of Archbishops at Carthage.

Thereafter, there were some who denied the doctrine of atonement whose position is referred to in the article "atonement" in the Encyclopaedia Britannica.

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38. Augustine, vol. 1, p. 621.

CHAPTER 3

WORSHIP AND RITES

What are the methods of worship in Christianity? Before we know this, it will be appropriate to understand the basic principles governing Christian worship. According to Raymond Abba these principles are four, namely: [39]

1. Worship is in reality gratitude for the sacrifice made by the Word of god, that is. Jesus on behalf of man.

2. True and proper worship can only be done by the act of the Holy Spirit. In his letter to the Romans Paul says:

> "Likewise the spirit helps us in our nearness; for we do not know how to pray as we ought, but the spirit himself intercedes for us with signs too deep for words" (Rom. 8:26)

3. Worship is in reality a collective act which the church only can fulfil. If a person wishes on an individual level to carry out worship, then such worship is only possible if he becomes a member of the Church.

4. Worship is the basic function of the Church. It expresses itself to the world in the form of the body of Jesus.

Mass

There are many methods of worship in Christianity. But we can only explain two methods in this short article which

39. Abba, p. 3.

are adopted regularly and are dealt with repeatedly in discussions of the subject. One of these is Mass. priests refer to it as "*Namaaz*" in order to make Muslims understand.

According to F.C. Burkitt [40], the procedure for Mass is that people gather in the Church every day, morning and evening. One person from amongst them reads a port ion of the Bible. The portion is generally a section from the Old Testament. During such recitation, all present remain standing. At the end of each hymn, bells are rung and prayers are said. At the time of such prayers, it is desirable as a confession of sins to shed tears. This procedure continued from the 3rd century AD up to present day, and has been emphasised in some writings.

Baptism

This is the first ritual of Christianity. This is a form of bathing which is administered to those who enter the Christian faith. Without it, nobody could be said to be a Christian. Behind this ritual lies the doctrine of redemption. The Christian belief is that a man by means of baptism dies for the sake of Jesus, and then becomes alive again. By means of "death", he receives the punishment of the original sin. He then in his new life acquires a free will. Those who wish to enter the Christian faith must pass through a premilinary stage in which they acquire the basic teachings of the faith. In that period, they are not called "Christians", but are known as Catechumens. And they do not have permission to partake in the Passover. Then some time before Easter, or the Pentecost, they are given the baptism [41].

The Church has a special room to administer the Baptism. Special people are designated for the act.

40.Burkitt, p. 152
41. Burkitt. p. 150-152.

According to the well known theologian Cyril, the person undergoing Baptism is made to lie in the baptistry with his back facing the West. Then such person extends his hand to the West and says:

> "O Satan, I withdraw myself from you and each of your acts".

Then he faces the East, and verbally proclaims the cardinal doctrines of Christianity. Then his clothes are removed, and he is anointed head to foot with an oil. Thereafter, he is put into the pool of baptism. The person administering the baptism then asks him three questions - whether he believes in the father, son and holy spirit in the prescribed manner? The proposed convert answers to each question; "Yes, I believe." Then he is taken out from the pool, and again his forehead, ears, nose and chest is anointed with the oil. He is then made to wear white clothes which is indicative of his purification from previous sins by means of Baptism. The Group of persons undergoing baptism then together enter the Church and for the first time partake in the Passover.

Passover

This is the most important rite after adoption of Christianity and it is celebrated in commemoration of the sacrifice of Jesus. One day before the alleged arrest of Jesus, follows:

> "Now as they were eating, Jesus took bread, and blessed, and broke it, and gave it to the disciples and said, 'Take, eat; this is my body.' And he took cup, and when he had given thanks he gave it to them, saying, 'Drink of it, all of you; for this is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins. (Mat. 26:26)

Luke adds Jesus thereafter said:

> "Do this in remembrance of me"

The rite of Passover is held in fulfilment of this order.

The well known Christian Scholar Justin Martyr [42] explains the procedure of Passover, namely that there is a gathering every Sunday at Church. At the beginning thereof some prayers and hymns are sung. Then the participants embrace each other and convey their good wishes. Bread and wine is then brought. The head of the gathering takes the bread and wine and makes prayers of blessing to the father, son and holy spirit. All participants answer *Ameen*. the deacons of the Church thereupon distribute the bread and wine amongst the participants. The bread immediately by means of this act becomes the body of Christ, and the wine his blood; all participants by eating and drinking refresh their doctrine of redemption.

After Justin, there have been and continues t o be much change in the procedure and use of words in regard to this rite. But, t he basic aspect of the rite is that the bread and wine, when given by the head of gathering to the participants, immediately according to Christian belief, change their nature and become the body and blood of Jesus, despite their outward appearance. Cyril writes: [43]

> "When the head completes his prayers, then the Holy Spirit descends upon the bread and wine and changes them to body and blood."

It is a matter of controversy and debate for years as to how bread and wine upon a moment became changed to body and blood. To the extent that the Protestant sect which emerged in the sixteenth century rejected this doctrine. According to it, this rite is merely in memory of the sacrifice of Jesus. It did not however, accept the transformation from bread to body, and wine to blood. apart from the Passover, this rite has other names, namely Eucharist, Sacred Meal, Holy Communion.

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42. Quoted by Burkitt, p. 165-167.
43. Quoted by Britannica.

Apart from Baptism and the Passover, there are five other rites according to the Roman Catholic sect. The Protestant sect however, did not accept these rites. Calvin writes: [44]

> "From amongst these rituals, only two were prescribed by our saviour: baptism and the passover; because we regard the seven made under the aegis of the Pope as fabricated".

In view of the fact that there is no consensus on these rites, and that there is no need to be acquainted with them, we shall not deal with them for the sake of brevity.

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44. Calvin, confession 76.



A RESUME OF THE HISTORY OF CHRISTIANITY

CHAPTER 4

HISTORY OF THE ISRAELITES: AN OVERVIEW [45]

Israail is the name of Yaqub (Jacob) (عليه السلام) who had twelve sons, and their children are known as "the children of Israail" (Banu Israail). In ancient times, God had chosen this house to assume the office of Prophethood. Innumerable prophets were sent from amongst this house. The original home of the children of Israail was the area of Palestine. But the Amalekites after having usurped this land forced them to slavery. They then during the time of Moses obtained freedom from such slavery. However, they could not regain Palestine at the time of the demise of Moses. Thereafter, Jushu (Joshua) and then Kalib, became Prophet s. (Jushu عليه السلام) conquered a large portion of Palestine by fighting the Amalekites. Thereafter, the children of Israail faced onslaughts from all sides. At that time, their life was analogous to t hat of the bedouin Arabs, and to a large extent was based on tribal lines. Hence, they looked with respect on that person who, on the basis of tribal law, excelled in inter-tribal warfare. If such person moreover displayed military insight and ability, they made him their leader in external wars. Such leaders were referred to by them as "Judges". The book of the Bible entitled "Judges" is a narrative of their efforts, and

45. See generally, Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics.

that era was appropriately named as "the era of the judges".

Whilst the people of Israel successfully defended external attacks during the era of the judges, they were also in the 11the century B.C defeat ed by the Canaanites who acquired control over a large area of Palestine, which control lasted until the time of David (Dawood عليه السلام).

Finally, when Samuel was sent as Prophet, the people of Israail told him that they were constricted by their bedouin life, and requested him to pray to God to appoint over them a king whom they could obey and do battle against the Philistines. In response to the request of Samuel, a person from amongst them was appointed king, whose name according to Qur'an was Talut, and Saul according to the Bible. (Samuel 1:13) Talut fought the Philistines. At that time, David was a youth. He by accident became a member of the group of Talut. Jalut (Goliath) from amongst the Philistines sought a duel. David responded and killed him. This brought David such respect and glory amongst the Israelites that they made him king after Saul. This was the first time that God conferred prophethood on a king. The control of the people of Israel over Palestine was virtually completed during the time of David. After him, Solomon in 974 B.C further consolidated power and brought his reign to its peak. On the order of God, he built "Baitul Maqdis", and named his kingship "Judaea" following the name of his grandfather. However, in 938 B.C, after the death of Solomon, his son Roboam, who assumed power, not only ended by reason of his incompetency the religious and spiritual control but also caused great harm to the Political stability of the kingdom. In his time, a former servant of Solomon rebelled and established a separate kingdom in the name of Israail. The result was that the people of Israail were divided into two kingdoms. In the North, the kingdom of Israail, whose

capital was Somaria and in the south Judaea whose capital was Jerusalem. The two kingdoms had for a long period of time religious and political differences which continued until the invasion of Nebuchednezzar.

Over a period of time, idolatry became rife in both lands. Hence, in order to remove such idolatry, prophets of God were sent from time to time. When the misdeeds of the people of Israail excelled all limits, God imposed on them a king Nebuchednezzar (of Babylon) who in 586 BC fiercely attacked Jerusalem and finally destroyed it. The king of Jerusalem and the remaining Jews were taken prisoner and remained in slavery for years.

Finally, when in 536 BC Cyrus of Iran conquered Babylon, he permitted the Jews to return to Jerusalem and rebuilt Baitul Maqdis. Consequently, in 515 BC. It was rebuilt and Jews once again populated Jerusalem.

The Kingdom of Israail was prior to Judaea destroyed at the hands of the Assyrians. And now, although their religious differences were reduced to a considerable extent, they did not acquire kingship. From 400 BC, the people of Israail lived under different kings. In 332 BC Alexander the Great acquired control and kingship over them. It was at that time that he translated the Old Testament which is well known as the Septuagint.

In 160 BC the Syrian king Antiochus Epiphanious brutally killed them on a mass scale and burnt all the copies of the Old Testament. At this time, a brave person from amongst the people of Israail, known as Judah Macabee formed a group and thereby acquired control over a large part of Palestine and put to flight the Assyrians. This rule of Macabees lasted until 70 AD.

Coming of Jesus

Apart from the small kingdom of Macabees, the Jews of that time were dispersed. They had various settlements

around the Meditteranean Sea. Upon the destruction of Babylon, a fairly large number of Jews settled in Palestine. But the majority were however resident in Babylon itself. The Romans ruled over a portion of Palestine, and this rule was under the control of Rome. Jerusalem was a sovereign state of Rome which was known as "Roman Judaea". A ruler was appointed by the Romans to rule over Jerusalem. The Jews, due to lack of material resources could not secure their freedom. Hence, their gaze was naturally fixed on the future. Many of them were awaiting a saviour from God who would free them from slavery and restore to them nationhood.

Jesus was born in the reign of Emperor Augustus. We do not have a reliable record of the life of Jesus. We have only the Bible in its four books which is the only means of ascertaining the pure life of Jesus. However, the Bible in our view is not an authentic source.

Resume of History of Christianity

What is the beginning of Christianity which has assumed its present form? The detailed answer is to a great extent hidden. In the light of the available material, we know that after the ascension of Jesus into Heaven, his disciples notwithstanding opposition became engrossed in propagation. They attained considerable success in spite of numerous obstacles.

At that point, an even occurred which changed conditions completely. The event was that a well known Jewish priest Saul who until that time was severely oppressing the followers of Christianity, suddenly accepted this faith. He claimed that on the road to Damascus, a light shone on him, and he heard the voice of Jesus from heaven, "Why do you tease me?" the event influence him to the extent that his heart became inclined to Christianity.

When Saul announced his conversion to the disciples, the majority of them refused to believe him. However, the first disciple to believe was Barnabas. The rest accepted this, and all of them included SAIL in their brotherhood. Saul changed his name to Paul, and thereafter devoted himself to propagation of Christianity. To the extent that as a consequence of his deepseated effort and struggle, many people who were not Christians embraced Christianity. By reason of such service, his influence amongst the followers of this faith continued to grow. He gradually began to propagate the doctrine of the divinity of Christ, redemption, and incarnation. History indicates to this extent that some disciples openly opposed him at this juncture. However, what happened thereafter is completely clouded save that we know that the influence of Paul continued to increase.

Age of Persecution

Until the beginning of the 4th century AD, Christianity remained a subdued religion. Christian historians refer to that period as the age of persecution. At that time, the Romans from a political viewpoint ruled over the Christians. From a religious viewpoint, the Jews exercised supremacy over them. The Jews and Romans concurred in mocking and debasing them. A characteristic of this era is also that the system of worship and belief in Christianity was until then not codified. for this reason, a number of sects appeared in the Christian world of that time. Ignatius (118 AD), Clement (100 AD), Polycarp (155 AD), Irenaeus (188 AD) and others were the great theologians of the time whose writings form the basis of Christianity.

Constantine the Great

The year 306 AD is a joyous one in the history of Christianity. Because Constantine the First was made Emperor of Rome in that year. He embraced Christianity,

and made it solid. This was the first time that the ruling emperor began propagating Christianity instead of persecuting its followers. He built many Churches in Constantinople, Jerusalem, Rome and Tyre. And he honoured the Christian theologians and caused them to be devoted to religious research. For this reason, various councils of theologians were held in different parts of the empire during his reign in which the system of Christian beliefs were systematically codified. In this regard, the council of Nicaea, which was convened in AD 325 at Nicaea, is of fundamental importance At this council the doctrine of trinity was for the first time held to be a cardinal belief of Christianity. The deniers of this belief, Arius and others were excommunicated. On this occasion, the Christian beliefs were for the first time recorded, and are well known as the Athanasian Creed [46].

Although the Council of Nicaea codified the basic beliefs, they were ambiguous to the extent that there were serious differences as to their interpretation for a considerable period. To resolve such differences as to their interpretation for a considerable period. To resolve such differences, the Christian theologians convened various councils at different places. These debates and disputes reached their pinnacle in the 5th and 6th centuries AD. Hence, this era is referred to by the Christian historians as "the Age of Councils" or the "period of controversy".

From Constantine of Gregory

For the period 313 AD to 539 AD, the Christian faith exercised supermacy over the Roman monarch. Despite opposition from idolatrous religions, Christianity was generally prevalent in the kingdom. In this period, the Roman Legislature was also influenced by this faith.

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46. It is clear that the beliefs which are popularly known as the Athanesian creed are not those of Athanasius, but were later denoted as such by somebody.

The outstanding feature of that time was that Christianity was divided over two kingdoms. The one was in the East which had its capital at Constantinople and which included Balkan, Greece, Asia Minor, Egypt and Abbysinnia and the greatest religious figure in the Eastern Empire was known as the Pattriarch. The other kingdom was in the west whose capital was Rome, and most of the areas of Europe fell under it. The leading religious figure of the west was known as the Pope. Since the beginning there was mutual rivalry between the two empires, and each on tried to prove its religious superiority over the other.

The second feature of this era was that monasticism and asceticism was widespread. The basic teaching of monasticism was that the pleasure of God could only be obtained by abandoning the pleasures of the world. To the extent that man will inflict pain on himself, he will attain nearness to God. Although the inclination to monasticism commenced from the 4th century AD, and in the 5th century AD there were many monasteries in Britain and France, the first monk however who developed a systemized organization was the 6th century monk Pakum. After him Barsibius and Jerome were its well known leaders.

The Dark Ages

In 590 AD, Gregory the first became Pope. From his time to Charlemagne (860 AD) represents the first part of what Christian historians describe as the "Dark Ages". Because, this is the worst period in Christian history of political and intellectual decline and degeneration. An important reason for this was that Islam was in this period on the ascendancy, whilst dissention and disunity was rife amongst Christians.

There are two important features of this period. The one is that the Western Christians commenced

propagation of Christianity in various parts of Europe. For the first time, the Roman Christians acquired religious victory over Britain, Germany and other areas. The result was that after continued struggle for four centuries, the whole Europe became Christian.

The second feature is that the sun of Islam began to rise in that period, and in a short time it's rays spread over half the world. In the West-Egypt, Africa, Spain and in the East-Syria and Iran. For this reason, the Christian hold especially in the Eastern regions began to break.

The Middle Ages

The period from 800 AD to 1521 AD is known as the Medieval Era. The basic feature of this era is the war between the Pope and the Emperor of the time which lasted for years. Alfred A. Garvey has divided this period into three parts:

(a) from Charlemagne to Pope Gregory VII (800 - 1073) which period is characterised by the growing power of the papacy.

(b) From Gregory VII to Boniface VIII (1073 - 1294), the time when the Pope exercised full sway in Western Europe.

(c) from Boniface VIII to the reformat ion (1294 - 1517) the papacy declines, the need for reform asserts itself, and there are various movements towards it.

We shall summarize below the important events of this era.

The Great Schism

The "great schism" is a term of Christian history which refers to the great dispute between the Easter and Western Church which resulted in the permanent separation and severance between the two. The Eastern church henceforth called itself "the holy Orthodox Church". The

main causes of this estrangement are the following:

(i) The doctrinal differences between the two; the Eastern Church held that the holy spirit proceeds from the Father alone through the son, but the Western that He proceeds both from the Father and from the Son. The former asserts a subordination of the son to the Father; the latter maintains an equality of Fat her and Son. The Eastern Church accused the Western Church of committing a serious wrong in attempting to distort the Nicene Creed by inserting a certain word therein to support its theories.

(ii) There was a consart of race. In the west, the latin race had been affected by an infusion of Germanic blood. In the East, the Greek race had been blended with Asiatic peoples.

(iii) As stated previously, the division of the one Roman Empire into an eastern and western gave to Christendom two centres of authority and influence, and the new capital in the East, Constantinople, became a formidable rival to the ancient city of Rome in the West.

(iv) The Pope in Rome was not, however, prepared to surrender to the Patriarch of Constantinople, or even to share with him, the primacy that the position of Rome hitherto had secured for its bishop, and for several centuries the contest for power was waged.

(v) When Leo IX in 1504 sought to force the views of the West on the East, and the Patriach of Constantinople, Michael refused submission, "the Papal legates formally laid on the alter of St. Sophia a sentence of anathema", and the schism was now complete.

Religious Wars

The second feature of this era is the religious wars which are referred to as the "Crusades" by Christian historians. The Muslims during the time of Caliph 'Umar رضى الله عنه had conquered the areas of Jerusalem, Palestine and Syria. At that time, the defence of itself by the Christian world was a serious problem. Hence, they could not proceed and conceive of the recovery of these holy lands. However, when the rising power of the Muslims was to an extent curtailed, and a degree of weakness entered into Muslim ranks, the Christian kings on the advise of their clergy, decided once again to recover Jerusalem. These wars were fought against the Saljuk Turks and Ayubi emperors. Prior to these wars, Christianity did not know of religious wars or crusades. But in 1095, Pope Urban II announced at the council of Clement that the crusades were religious wars. Clarke, in his "Short History of the Church" states in this regard:

> "Urban, in order entice people, announced that whoever participates in this war, he will certainly be forgiven, and like Muhammad ~ he promised that those who die on the battlefield will go straight t o paradise."

In this way, seven crusades were fought, and the Christians were badly defeated at the hands of Saluddin Ayyubi.

Corruption of Papacy

After the religious wars, the power and influence of the Pope began to wane to a considerable extent. But, the real decline began from the time of Pope Innocent IV (1243). The reason for this decline was that Pope Innocent IV began to use his office for political and worldly gains. During his time trading in indulgences became rife, and members of opposition sects were burnt alive. Later Popes took these inequitous measures to their extreme. During

this period, Pope Boniface VIII became extremely opposed to Edward I and Phillip IV of France. The result was that the papacy was completely ended in the Roman Empire for 71 years (1305 - 1377). For this period, the popes lived in France. Hence, the period was referred to as the "Babylonian Exile".

Then from 1375 - 1413, a new calamity arose, namely that two popes instead of one were elected. Each claimed absolute power, and were elected through cardinals. The one was elected for the areas of France, Spain and the other for Italy, England and Germany. The latter was referred to as the Roman Pope. This separation is referred to by some historians as "the great schism".

Attempts in the Name of Reform

At the height of papal corruption, there were a number of attempts at reformation. Amongst the forerunner was John Wyclif (1324 - 1384) who was an opponent of the corruption and abuses of the Church, and a claimant of the election of righteous popes. He was the first to cause the bible to be translated into English, which was published in 1385. Whereas, prior to that, it was a serious crime to translate the bible in any other tongue. Influenced by his teaching, John Hus and Jerome upheld the cause of reform.

With a view to ending the papal controversy and "great schism", the council of PISA was convened in 1409. Eighty bishops were present, and they removed from office both popes, and elected as pope, Alexander V. But he died immediately. Thereafter, a pirate John was elected Pope. But he could not suppress his contemporary Popes. The result was that instead of two, there were three popes in office, and the rift in the church became even greater.

Finally, in November 1414 a council was convened at Constance, at which not only was the great schism

completed, but also the reformist teaching of John Huss was declared heretic. In the result, Huss and his pupil Jerome were burnt alive, and the moral and religious degeneration of the Church was maintained.

However, the movement of John Huss was alive, and could not be suppressed by force. Its adherents grew in time to the extend that the Pope perceived his power to be under threat . An attempt was then made at the council of Basel in 1431 to suppress the reformist movement by means of argument but with no effective result.

Era of Reform and Protestantism

.Finally in 1483 the founder of Protestantism, Martin Luther was born. He hammered the final nail in the coffin of papacy. He first announced his opposition to commerce in indulgences. When this was accept ed, he rebelled against the extraordinary power of the Pope, and apart from baptism and the Lord's supper, he regarded all other rituals as an innovation of the Roman Church. In Switzerland, ulrich, Zwingli raised the same voice of reform. Thereafter, John Calvin in the early 16th century, in Geneva, gave this movement impetus and wide significance. To the extent that the voice of reform reached France, Italy, Germany and the rest of Europe. Finally the kings of England Henry VII and Edward VI were influenced by the movement so that Protestantism became a strong opponent of Catholicism.

Renaissance

This was the era in which Europe outstripped the world in scientific and technological advancement. The people of Europe who were till then steeped in superstition, now became alive. The abuse of papacy, and corruption of the Church created in their hearts a deep rancour towards religion. Martin Luther for the first time ventured to differ with his predecessors in the interpretation of the bible and

wage war against the church. But when this door was opened once, it continued to remain open. Luther only arrogated to himself the interpretation of the Bible. Even he did not dare to criticise the book itself. However, those after him who raised the banner of rationalism did not spare the Bible in their criticism. They criticised each and every doctrine of Christianity and reduced them to the level of mockery.

Their approach was to test every claim of religion on the alter of reason. And to reject anything which was irrational, even if the Church valued such teachings for centuries. They called themselves rationalists and their epoch "the age of reason".

William Shillingworth, 1602 - 1644, is the foremost leader of this group. He raised the voice of rationalism for the first time. Lord Herbert 1583 - 1648 and Thomas Hobbes 1588 - 1671 etc. were also leading figures of rationalism.

No doctrine was safe from the sweep of rationalism. To the extent that sceptics such as Voltaire 1694 - 1788 emerged who even openly sowed the seeds of doubts in the existence of God, and later openly negated the existence of God. Bertand Russel; the well known Philosopher of our age, is the final adherent of this group.

The Era of Modernism

The reaction of rationalism on the adherents of Christianity was twofold. One was that some people were overcome by rationalism and began to make changes to the faith. This movement is known as modernism. They hold that whilst the faith is fundamentally correct, it s interpretation and application has proceeded on an incorrect basis. The bible contains sufficient flexibility to be adapted to the scientific advances of each age. For this purpose, certain unimportant portions of the Bible could be

disregarded, and its words and traditional import could be sacrificed.

According to Doctor Pull Lane the leader of this movement was Rousseau. In recent times, Professor Harnach and Renan were also well known adherents thereof.

Movement of Revivalism

The second consequence of rationalism which arose as a reaction to it, was that a movement emerged to revive Roman Catholicism known as "Catholic Revival Movement". The proponents of this movement waged war against the rationalists. They asserted that Christianity is the same as expounded by their predecessors, and as defined continuously by the various councils. Hence, the Church must be the supreme power. There was no need to make changes to Catholic doctrines. This movement began in the 19th Century. This was the time when the West was licking it s wounds in the wake of experiencing fully materialism. Once again there was in consequence of the great uneasiness wrought by materialism, a feeling of return to the spirit. The movement of revivalism enlisted such people, and once again reverted to those doctrines of Christianity which brought it to the throes of destruction in the 13th and 14th century. Amongst the leading proponents of this movement J.A. Knox (1757 - 1831 AD), J.H. Newman (1801 - 1890), Hurell Frond (1803 - 1836) and Richard William Church (1815 - 1890) are worthy of mention.

In the Christian world these three movements (rationalism, modernism and the revivalism) have remained, and members of all three movements are found in great numbers.

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THE REAL FOUNDER OF CHRISTIANITY

CHAPTER 5

WHO IS THE REAL FOUNDER OF CHRISTIANITY

The Christians claim that the foundation of Christianity was laid by Jesus (Isa عليه السلام) and that his teaching forms the basis of Christianity. However, the result of our research is to the contrary. It is accepted that Jesus was sent to the people of Israel and instructed them in a new faith. But research and investigation clearly reveals that the teaching of Jesus had ended a short while after him; and that such teaching was replaced by a school of thought which was completely contrary to the statements and teaching of Jesus. And this new school of thought gradually developed to the present form of Christianity.

We have in the light of research reached the conclusion in all honesty and sincerity that the founder of present day Christianity was not Jesus but St. Paul whose 14 epistles are included in the Bible.

Introduction to Paul

Before we adduce proof in support of our claim, it is necessary to be introduced to Paul.

The early life of Paul is clouded. However, we learn from the book "The Acts of the Apostles" and his letters that he was in the beginning a staunch Pharisee Jew of the tribe of Benjamin, and his original name was SAUL. In

the letter to the Philippians, he himself writes:

> "Circumcised on the eight day, of the people of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew born of the Hebrews, as to the Law a Pharisee" (3:5).

He was citizen of the Roman city Tarsus (as is apparent from Acts 22:28). After the somewhat ambiguous reference to his early life, first mention of him is made in the Acts (7:58) wherein he is referred to by name of Saul. Then the book Acts narrates his life story in three parts, namely that, he was an avowed enemy of the disciples and followers of Jesus. He was involved day and night in their persecution. Then suddenly he claimed as follows:

> "I myself was convinced that I ought to do many things in opposing the name of Jesus of Nazareth. And I did so in Jerusalem. I not only shut up many of the Saints in prison, by authority from the Chief priests, but when they were put to death I cast my vote against them. And I punished them often in all the synogogues and tried to make them blaspheme; and in raging fury against them, I persecuted them even to foreign cities, thus I journeyed to Damascus with the authority and commission of the chief priests. At midday, O King, I saw on the way a light from heaven, brighter than the sun, shining round me, and those who journeyed with me. And when we had all fallen to the ground, I heard a voice saying to me in the Hebrew language, 'Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me? It hurts you to kick against the goads" and I said, 'Who are you, Lord?' and the Lord said 'I am Jesus whom you are persecuting. But rise and stand upon your feet; for I have appealed to you for this purpose, to appoint you to serve and bear witness to the things in which you have seen me and to those in which I will appear to you, delivering you from the people and from the gentiles - to whom I send you to open their eyes, that they may turn from darkness to light and from the power of Satan to God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins and a place among those who are sanctified by faith in me".

Paul claimed that he brought faith in Jesus after this

incident whereupon he changed his name to "Paul". Initially, none of the disciples were willing to accept his claim - having regard to the fact that that person who was their and Jesus's avowed enemy only the day before, now truly believed in Jesus. But, a renowned disciple Barnabas was the first to believe in Paul, and the others accepted this. It is stated in the "Acts":

> "And when he had come to Jerusalem, he attempted to join the disciples; and they were all afraid of him, for they did not believe that he was a disciple. Barnabas took him, and brought him to the Apostles, and declared to them how on the road he had seen the Lord, who spoke to him, and at Damascus he had preached boldly in the name of Jesus. So he went in and out among them at Jerusalem, preaching boldly in the name of the Lord. And he spoke and disputed against the Hellenists but they were seeking to kill him. And when the brethren knew it, they brought him down to Caesarea, and sent him off to Tarsus. (Acts 9:26)

Paul thereafter joined the disciples and propagated Christianity, and is considered its leading figure.

The result of our research is that Paul is the founder of the basic beliefs and theories of modern day Christianity. Jesus never taught such beliefs and theories.

Jesus and Paul

This research is based on many arguments and proofs. We shall first show the differences and conflict between the teachings of Jesus and Paul.

In the first part , we have established by authentic references of Christian theologians, that the basis of Christianity is the doctrine of Trinity, incarnation and redemption. The deniers of these doctrines are declared heretics by Christian theologians. In reality, Christianity is distinguished from other religions on the basis of these doctrines only. But, in truth, none of these doctrines are

supported or proved by the statements of Jesus. Not even one of the statements attributed to Jesus in the present Bible clearly support or prove these doctrines. On the contrary, there are numerous statements which refute these doctrines.

Trinity and Incarnation

First of all, take the doctrine of trinity - "three in one, one in three". If this enigma is regarded as correct and the source of salvation, no one would deny that it is extremely ambiguous and vague. The human intellect cannot comprehend this doctrine, unless it is explained by revelation. Did not the ambiguity of this doctrine demand that Jesus himself ought to have clearly explained it, and expound it in clear terms? If this doctrine was open to human comprehension, then it was the duty of Jesus to explain it by means of clear and convincing arguments so that people may not fall into error. If the doctrine was beyond the ken of human understanding, then at the very least they should have been informed that this is so, and therefore that they should believe therein without proof.

Professor Maurice Relton (who is amongst the of-quoted and popular Christian theologians) has written very nicely in relation to God. He says: [47]

> "A full and exact analysis, therefore, of his essence is beyond the power of our intelligence. What he is in himself is unknown, save so far as his own self-disclosure has revealed it...."

It is clear from this statement that God transmits by way of revelation the explanation of those aspects of his existence on which it is necessary to have faith. If the theory of trinity was part of such faith, then was it not incumbent on Jesus to explain it to the people?

47. Relton. p.

On the contrary, if we view the statements and sayings of Jesus, we gather that he did not explain this doctrine even once in his lifetime. As opposed to this, he always gave instruction on the unity of God, and never did he say that God is composed of three persons and the three together are one. Amongst the innumerable statements of Jesus relating to God, we quote two of them here. In the Gospels of Matthew and Mark, it is stated that Jesus said:

> "Hear, O Israel: the Lord our God, the Lord is One; and you shall love the Lord, your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind, and with all your strength" (Mark 12:29; Matt 22:36).

In the gospel of John, Jesus invokes God as follows:

> "And this is eternal life that they know thee the only true God, and Jesus christ whom thou hast sent". (John 17 : 2)

Apart from this, nowhere has Jesus stated that he is in reality God and that he was incarnated in human form to cause the sins of man to be forgiven. On the contrary, he always referred to himself by the pseudonym "son of Adam" as appears in sixty places in the Bible.

For some time now, there has been a strong awareness in the Christian world that Jesus did not refer to himself as God, but that the doctrine of his divinity was a creation of later times. In this regard a number of references could be quoted of Christian theologians, but we shall confine ourselves to one selected reference from which one could infer that truth however concealed under the guise of "holy theories" will inevitably manifest itself. Professor Harnack was a well-known thinker of early twentieth century. A number of his books on Christianity were read with great acceptance in Europe and America. He was not a rationalist, but a modernist. He was a firm believer of whatever he considered to be correct in Christianity. In 1899 and 1900 he delivered some lectures

on Christianity in the German language which were published under the title Das Wesen Des Christentums. An English translation was later published under the name "What is Christianity?" These lectures were overwhelmingly received with success in Germany, England and America. These lectures have now assumed such historical importance that no historian of modern times would omit reference to them.

We set out in his own words his theory relating to JESUS 48.

"Before we examine Jesus's own testimony about himself, two leading points must be established. In the first place, he desired no other belief in his person and no other attachment to it than is contained in the keeping of his commandments. Even in the fourth gospel, in which Jesus's person often seems to be raised above the contents of the gospel, the idea is still clearly formulated: 'If ye love me, keep my commandment'. He must himself have found, during his labours, that some people honoured, nay, even trusted him, without troubling themselves about the contents of his message. It was to them that he addressed the reprimand: 'Not everyone that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father'. To lay down any 'Doctrine' about his person and his dignity independently of the gospel was, then, quite outside his sphere of ideas. In the second place, he described the Lord of Heaven and earth as his God and his Father; as the greater, and as Him who is alone good. He is certain that everything which he has and everything what he is to accomplish comes from his Father. He prays to Him; he subjects himself to His Will; he struggles hard to find our what it is and to fulfil it. Aim, strength, understanding, the

48. Harnach, p. 125-128: p. 148.

issue, and the herd, must, all come from the Father. This is what the Gospels say, and it cannot be turned and twisted. This feeling, praying, working, struggling and suffering individual is a man who in the face of his God also associates himself with other men.

These two facts mark out, as it were, the boundaries of the ground covered by Jesus, testimony of himself. They do not, it is true, give us any positive information as to what he said; but we shall understand what he really meant by his testimony if we look closely at the two descriptions which he gave of himself: the Son of God and the Messiah (the son of David, the Son of Man).....

Let us first of all consider the designation "Son of God". Jesus in one of his discourses made it specifically clear why and in what sense he gave himself this name. The saying is to be found in Matthew, and not as might perhaps have been expected, in John:

> "No man knoweth the son but the Father; neither knoweth any man the father, save the son, and he to whomsoever the son will reveal him"...
>
> The consciousness which he possesses of being the Son of God is therefore, nothing but the practical consequences of knowing God as the Father and as his Father. Rightly understood, the name of Son means nothing but the knowledge of God. Here, however, two observations are to be made. Jesus is convinced that he knows God in a way in which no one ever knew Him before. In this consciousness he knows himself to be the Son called and instituted of God, and to be the Son of God... (p 125 - p 128)
>
> "The Gospel, as Jesus proclaimed it, has to do with the father only and not with the son. This is no paradox, nor on the other hand is it "Rationalism", but the simple expression of the actual fact as the evangelists give it" (p 144).
>
> "The Gospel puts the living God before us. Here also, the confession of Him in belief in Him and in the fulfilment of His Will is the sole thing to be confessed;

> this is what Jesus Christ meant". (p 148)

Our purpose is quoting the lengthy excerpt of Dr. Harnack is to show that whenever a sincere and honest assessment of the gospel was made, then the conclusion was reached that Jesus never said anything apart from the fact that he was the servant and prophet of God. In today's gospels, also, no statement of Jesus can be found to the effect that he is God or son of God.

The Disciples' View of Jesus

After Jesus, his disciples are second in rank. If we research their statements, we do not find any conception of Trinity or incarnation. The bible ascribes the disciples to have used the word "God" for Jesus. But this word has been frequently used in the sense of "Master" or "Teacher". There are a number of verses in the Bible in which the disciples refer to Jesus as "Lord" "My Lord" in the sense of teacher. According to Matthew, Jesus said:

> "But you are not to be called Rabbi, for you have one teacher, and you are all brethren, and call no man your fat her on earth, for you have one father, who is in heaven. Neither be called masters, for you have one master, the Christ". (Matt 23 : 8 - 11)

It is therefore clear that the disciples by referring to Jesus as "*Rabbi*" and "Lord" meant master and teacher, and not God. Hence, it cannot be argued by reference to this word that they regarded Jesus as God. Apart from this word, there is not even a letter which supports or refers to the doctrines of trinity or incarnation. On the contrary, certain clear verses are found which establish that the disciples considered Jesus to be a messenger. Peter, who had an honoured position amongst the disciples, once in a lecture to the Jews stated:

> "Men of Israel, hear those words: Jesus of Nazareth, a man attested to you by God with mighty works and wonders and signs which God did through him in your

midst, as you yourselves know". (Acts 2:22)

It is clear that this address was made to Jews in order to invite them to Christianity. If the doctrines of trinity and incarnation were basic tenets of Christianity, then Peter ought to have said that Jesus of Nazareth was "one of three persons of God", instead of saying "A Man". Instead of saying "Attested by god", he ought to have said simply "God", and should have explained to the Jews the doctrines of trinity and incarnation. Further on he says :

> "The God of Abraham and of Issac and of Jacob, the God of our fathers, glorified His Servant Jesus...." (Act 3:13)

In the Acts itself, it is stated that on one occasion, all the disciples prayed in one voice:

> "For truly in this city there were gathered together against They Holy Servant Jesus, whom thou didst anoint, both Herod and Pontius Pilate...." (Acts 4:27)

Apart from this, the disciple Barnabas on one occasion says:

> "And he exhorted them all to remain faithful to the Lord with steadfast purpose, for he was a good man, full of the Holy spirit and of Faith".

Here also, Jesus is referred to as "a good man".

All these verses, clearly and unequivocally show and reveal the reality, that the disciples regarded Jesus simply as "a man", a "messenger of God", "servant of God", "Messiah", and no more.

We have seen that from Jesus to the disciples, the doctrines of trinity and incarnation have not been proved. There are in fact a number of clear verses proving the contrary.

Accordingly, Paul is the first person who clearly and expressly espouses the doctrines of trinity and incarnation. In his letter to the Philippians he says:

> ".....Jesus, who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but

emptied himself, taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. And being found in human form he humbled himself and became obedient unto death, even death on a cross. Therefore god has highly exalted him.... that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow.... and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord,..... (Phil 2 : 6 - 11)

In his letter to the Colossians he says:

"He is the image of the invisible God, the first-born of all creation; for in him all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether, thrones or dominions or principalities or authorities - all things were created through him and for him". (Col 1:15-17)

Further on, he writes:

"For in him the whole fullness of deity dwells bodily...." (Cor : 2 : 9)

We have seen that the disciples used the word "Master" in regard to Jesus, which word in the light of the foregoing meant "Teacher". But they never used the word "Lord" or "Incarnate". This doctrine was expoused by PAUL.

The Status of Gospel of John

An objection may arise, namely that the doctrine of incarnation appears in the beginning of the gospel of John as follows:

"In the beginning was the word, and the word was with God, and the word was God". (1:1)

It states further:

"And the word became flesh and dwelt among us, full of grace and truth; we have beheld his glory, glory as of the only son from the Father".

These are the words attributed to John. Because John was a disciple, it appears that the founder of the doctrine of incarnation was not Paul, but John.

This objection would have been sound if the gospel of

John were at least as authoritative as the first three gospels. This gospel however is coincidentally a gospel whose authenticity is doubted by the Christians themselves. A large group among the Christians of the second century have denied that the gospel was written by John. In recent times, the authenticity of this gospel became the centre of debate and friction. Numerous books were written analysing its authenticity, and thousands of pages of discussion were written. It is not possible for us to summarise these discussions, but we shall refer to some salient points.

Irenaeus, Orogen, Clement and Eusebius were the first to claim that this gospel was the work of John, the disciple. However, at that time, (254 AD), a group of Christians refused to accept that John wrote the gospel. Encyclopaedia Britannica explains the position of this group as follows:

> "A positive testimony for the critical conclusion is derived from the existence of a group of Asia Minor Christians who about 165 rejected the gospel as not by John but by Cerinthus. The attribution is doubtless mistaken; but could Christians who were sufficiently numerous to deserve along discussion by St. Epiphanius in 374-377, and who upheld the Synoptists, stouts opposed the Gnostics and Montanists, and had escaped every special designation till the Bishop nick-named them the "Alogi" (irrational ejectors of the Logos - Gospel), dare, in such a time and country, to hold such views, had the apostolic origin been incontestable."

Then there is internal evidence which shows that this gospel was not written by the disciple John. for example, the author of this book was certainly a Jewish theologian who was familiar with Jewish thought and ideas. As appears from the Acts (4:13), the apostle John, son of Zebedee was uneducated. Furthermore, the gospel reveals that its author was deeply learned and belonged to a noble family. Whereas John, the son of Zebedee had a lower status from a worldly viewpoint. Apart from this, the fourth

gospel differs radically in content and style from the first three gospels.

The first person to ascribe the gospel as the work of John was Irenaeus who, according to Christian scholars, could not be relied on as authentic in the field of critical analysis.

For similar reasons, a large group of Christian scholars in recent times are of the view t hat the gospel of John a fabrication and should not be included amongst revealed books.

But, those Christian scholars, who regard the gospel as correct and who wish to save it from the slander of fabrication, are virtually unanimous in our time that the author thereof was not John the son of Zebedee but John The Elder. James Mackinon writes : [49]

> "It is likely enough that Irenaeus, whose accuracy and critical discernment are not out standing has confused him with another John - John t he elder mentioned by Papias of Hierapolis in Asia, in the second quarter of the second century, as well as with the Prophet John of the Book of Revelation".

Barakatullah the well known Christian writer of Pakistan writes: [50]

> "We have reached the conclusion that the narration that the Gospel of John was written by John the son of Zebedee is incorrect".

He writes further:

> "The truth is that the theologians are not willing to accept without debate that the fourth gospel was written by John the son of Zebedee. And generally, theories to the contrary are seen".

He has in his book endeavoured in great detail to substantiate his claim that the author of the fourth Gospel was not John the Son of Zebedee. Why did he see the need to establish this claim? He provides an answer in the

49. Mackinon, p. 119.
50. Barakatullah, vol, 2. p. 140.

following words:

> "Those theologians who believe that the fourth gospel was written by John son of Zebedee - they do not generally accept the historical significance of this gospel. Their theory is that the fourth gospel is free of historical events, and that its contents belong to the author who put s it in the mouth of the word of God".

In view of the fact that the attribution of the fourth gospel as the work of John the son of Zebedee, the disciple, places its authenticity in serious doubt, the reverend has attempted to show that it was written by John the Elder. His research is that John the Elder was also a pupil of Jesus, but that he was not counted among the twelve disciples. Jesus had honoured him by including him in his company in his last days. John the Elder was a young person, cultured and learned in the Old Testament, and belonged to a noble family. He has expressed this in his gospel.

This conclusion is widely accepted in the Christian world today. On this basis they have rejected John the son of Zebedee, the disciple, as the author of the fourth gospel.

In our view, this conclusion is without foundation. Apart from protecting the originality of the gospel of John, we cannot see any other reason for it. The question arises that if John the Elder, apart from the twelve, was also another pupil of Jesus, why has he not mentioned in the first three gospels? The fourth gospel indicated that its author was not only in close contact with Jesus but also that Jesus loved him deeply. The author of the fourth gospel has in many places instead of using his name, has used the expression "the disciple whom Jesus loved". At the end, he says that the meaning of that expression is the author of the fourth gospel himself.

The ease with which he dealth with Jesus is expressed by him in the following words:

> "One of his disciples, whom Jesus loved, was lying close to the breast of Jesus". (13:23)

He says further:

> "So lying thus, close to the breast of Jesus, he said to him, Lord, who is it?" (13:25)

None amongst the twelve disciples dared to eat whilst lying on the breast of Jesus [51]. But this disciple was so loved that he did not see anything wrong in so eating. If Jesus was so close to him, then the first question is why did Jesus not include him amongst his disciples? Is it rationally acceptable that Judas Iscariot who was regarded a thief (John 12:6) and who betrayed Jesus and caused him to be arrested (Luke 22:3), be included amongst the twelve, and that pupil of Jesus, who ate by lying on his breast and who was most concerned at his ascension to heaven by reason of separation from him, should not be included amongst the disciples?

Secondly, why is it that the first three gospels, which according to Christians contair a complete description and detail of his life, even mentioning ordinary parsons who were connected to him such as Mary Magdalene, Martha to the extent that there is mention of his donkey, completely fail to make any reference to this beloved pupil of Jesus?

Then, if there were a disciple by name of John the Elder, apart from John the disciple, surely there was a need for authors of the four gospels to explain the distinction to avoid confusion. We not e that amongst the disciples of Jesus, there were two persons with the name James - James son of Zebedee, and James the son of Alphaeus. Similarly, there were two persons with the name of Judas - Judas son of James, and Judas Iscariot. To distinguish bet ween them, the authors of the gospels have taken care to mention them separately, so that nobody may be confused. (see Matt 10:6; Mark 3:16; Luke 6:14; Acts 1:13). If there were two persons by the name of John amongst the disciples of Jesus, then why did the authors of the gospels not dispel the confusion as in the case of

51. It must be noted that, apart from the fourth gospel, the other gospels do not mention the particular manner of eating and questioning of this disciple.

James and Judas?

Apart from this, if there were a beloved disciple of Jesus by name of John the Elder, then where did he go after the ascension of Jesus? The efforts and struggles of the disciples after Jesus in the propagation and teachings of Christianity are described in detail in the book Acts, wherein the struggles of his outstanding disciples are recorded. But, there is no reference in that book to a person known as John the Elder. It cannot also be said that he died immediately after the ascension of Jesus. Because the gospel of John was written very much after the time of Jesus. It is stated therein that - and this is famous amongst the disciples - the author of the fourth gospel will live till the day of judgment. (21:23) Hence, all Christian theologians, who regard John the Elder as separate from the John the son of Zebedee, are of the view that John the Elder remained alive for a considerable period after Jesus to the extent that Polycarp became his pupil.

The evidence is therefore indisputable that John the Elder was not a disciple of Jesus. There remains the verse at the end of the gospel of John, namely:

> "This is the disciple who is bearing witness to these things, and who has written these things; and we know that his testimony is true". (21:24)

The majority of Christian scholars are of the view that this verse is not that of the author of the gospel of John, but that is an addition of later times. The well known commentator of the Bible Westcott who is very cautious and careful in the criticism of the Bible, says in this regard: 52

> "These two verses appear to be separate notes attached to the gospel before its publication. The form of verse 24 contrasted with that of XIX 35 shows conclusively that it is not the witness of the evangelist. The words were probably added by the Epaesian Elders, to whom the preceding narrative had been

52. Quoted by Streeter, p. 430.

given both orally and in writing".

This view is supported by the well known writer of modern times Bishop Gore, and this is the reason why these two verses are not found in the codex sineticus. Hence, one cannot say that the writer of these verses was a disciple of Jesus.

It follows from the aforegoing as established beyond doubt that the author of the fourth gospel is neither John son of Zebedee the disciple, nor any other disciple of Jesus. Our view is that the author of this gospel was a person who lived very much later than the disciples, and who acquired his learning under Paul or his pupils. According to Westcott, in order to ascribe the gospel to John, son of Zebedee, certain sentences were added which indicate the personal experience of the writer, with a view to refuting the arguments of some gnostic sects of those times who rejected the divinity of Jesus. It is undisputed in the academic world that alternations in Holy books were common and continued in order to debate with opposing sects of the time. Professor Streeter, the well known Christian scholar of our times writes in his excellent work "The Four Gospels" in the most clear terms as follows: [53]

> "If then, in the Fourth Gospel we find an addition to the text, admittedly not by the original author, which makes a definite statement as to authorship, is it not more probable t hat it was made as some later date, perhaps also in some other locality, and was intended to assert a view as to the authorship of the book from which certain person at that time or place dissented? And that such dissent did exist in the second century we shall see shortly. That being so, the addition of the words "this is the disciple which....wrote these things" is to be interpreted as an attempt to settle a debated question, and is, therefore, additional evidence of the existence of doubts in regard to the authorship of the Gospel."

53. P. 4.

Hence, it is not without wonder, in such a situation that the fourth gospel and the letters of John were written by a pupil of Paul, and people in later times made certain alterations which indicate that the author himself personally met Jesus.

In the light of the general approach of those times, this conclusion appears to be correct. However, adopting a purely Christian view, the most that could be said is that the fourth gospel was written by John the Elder, but he was, instead of being a disciple of Jesus, a disciple of his disciples, and if one adopted the view of extreme optimism, then the view of Professor streeter could be adopted that the author of the fourth gospel was John the Elder, but that: [54]

> "John the Elder is described by Papias as a 'disciple of the Lord" by Polycarp as one "who had seen the Lord". We need not suppose that he had done much more than 'see' Him, brought perhaps as a boy of twelve years old to Jerusalem by his father on pilgrimage to the Passover. And he may have been among the crowd that looked on at the Crucifixion - people in those days were not careful to keep such sights from children. In that case by AD 95 he would have reached the age of seventy seven. The First Epistle of John was obviously written by a man of advanced years, who can pass quite naturally from "brethren" to "my little children" in the same paragraph (IJN III 13 and 18). this last phase would hardly have been written by a man under seventy".

There is, then, no difficulty on this score in supposing that John the Elder wrote the Gospel AD 90 - 95 at the age of seventy or more.

Conclusions

It is the purely extreme Christian view that attempts t o save the fourth gospel from being declared as created. If we free ourselves from the attempts at justification, and accept the theory as it is, we arrive at the following

54. Streeter, p. 443.

conclusions:

1. The author of the fourth gospel was not John the son of Zebedee, the disciple but John the Elder.
2. John the Elder is not amongst the disciples of Jesus.
3. John the Elder saw Jesus once at the age of twelve, but did not get the opportunity of serving him or hearing his teachings.
4. John the Elder saw Jesus in the last stage of Crucifixion.
5. He was not a citizen of Jerusalem, but he was a resident of the Southern regions of Canaan.
6. After Jesus and until 95 AD, we have no knowledge of him - as to where he lived? And from whom he acquired knowledge? Whose company he frequented? And what relationships he had with the disciples?
7. On or about 95 AD, at the age of about 70, he wrote the gospel of John in which he mentions for the first time the doctrine of incarnation.
8. Later an addition was made at the end of the gospel which indicated that its author was the disciple John the son of Zebedee or some beloved disciple of Jesus.

The above conclusions are not the result of our reasoning, but were arrived at by Christian theologians in order to save the gospel from being declared as created. In the light of these conclusions, we arrive at the following undisputed facts:

(a) The doctrine of incarnation cannot be ascribed to Jesus or any of his disciples.

(b) This doctrine was the first written in the life of Jesus by a person who at the age of twelve only saw Jesus but did not acquire learning from him.

(c) The person who presents this doctrine is unknown - that is, apart from his writing, his condition and situation is unknown - what type of person was he? What were his beliefs? Did he coin this doctrine himself? or did he hear it from somebody else? Where did he pass his life? What was his relationship with the disciples?

(d) This doctrine was insert ed in the Bible around 95 AD when his age was 70 and 28 years had passed since the death of Paul.

(e) Because Paul had died before him, and Paul had clearly expounded the doctrine of incarnation in his letters, it follows therefore that the first person to expound the doctrine was not John the Elder but Paul.

The Doctrine of Redemption

The foregoing discussion proves clearly that the doctrine of incarnation is neither supported by any statement of Jesus nor was it espoused by any disciple Paul was the first person to present the doctrine. Now, let us see who is the founder of the second doctrine of Christianity, namely, redemption. And from where did it originate?

This doctrine according to Daniel Wilson [55] is the spirit of Christianity! You have read in the first chapter that salvation on the one hand is dependent on this doctrine - baptism and the last supper are also based on it. On the other hand, the philosophy which underlies this doctrine is highly intricate and delicate. Hence, one would think that the four gospels would contain many statements of Jesus explaining the doctrine. And Jesus and his disciples would have clearly expounded it. Such thinking is correct because the cardinal beliefs and doctrines of any religion are death with in detail in the basic books and the writings

55. Wilson, p. 53.

of the founders of that religion. And the basic books of the religion wholly attempt to establish such doctrines. For example, the basic doctrines of Islam are the unity of God, the finality of the prophethood of Muhammad ﷺ and belief in the hereafter. Hence, the Qur'an is filled with explanation of these doctrines and their proofs.

But, the position of Christianity is the opposite. Those theories which are fundamental to Christianity and which distinguish it from other religions are absent from the gospels. There is no explanation for them from Jesus or any of his disciples. You have already noted the position of the doctrines of trinity and incarnation. The same applies to the doctrine of redemption which is not proved by any statement of Jesus.

In order to appreciate this, let us cast a glance on those verses of the gospel which Christians consider as supporting the doctrine, and from which the doctrine is derived. These verses are as follows:

> 1. "She will bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins" (Matt: 1:21)
>
> 2. "And the Angel said.... for to you is born this day in the city of David a saviour. Who is Christ the Lord". (Luke 2 : 10)
>
> 3. "For mine eyes have seen thy salvation" (Luke 2:30)
>
> 4. "For the son of man came to seek and save the lost". (Luke 19:10)
>
> 5. "Even the son of man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many" (Matt 20:28, Mark 10:48)
>
> 6. "For this is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins". (Matt 26:28)

Apart from the above verses, there is nothing in the

gospels relating to the Doctrine of Redemption. The difficulty is that after reading these verses the mind immediately directs itself to this doctrine because of its popularity and widespread publication. However, from the viewpoint of impartial research, if one divests the mind for a short while of all the details of the doctrine as set out in the first part of this work, and then reads the verses once, the plain meaning is that Jesus came to provide guidance and salvation to those steeped in the darkness of misguidance. And to show the straight path of guidance to those who became entitled to perpetual punishment by reason of denying God, polytheism and bad deeds, and thereby saving them from the punishment of hell, irrespective of the difficulties and hardships he had to face in his propagational activities and services.

> "And to give his life as a ransom for many", "And this is my blood of the covenant which is poured for many for the forgiveness of sins".

If the conception of the doctrine of redemption has not settled in the mind from the beginning, then the clear meaning of these verses is that Jesus is willing, in order to save people from misguidance and to give them the means of causing their previous sins to be forgiven, to even sacrifice his life. And he indicates this in these verses.

These verses do not support the philosophy that the free will of man was removed by reason of the sin of Adam; and that consequently the original sin became embedded in Adam and his children; and that therefore every innocent child became entitled to perpetual punishment. Then the person of God in the form of the son assumed upon himself the sins of the world by means of the with the result that the original sin of all was forgiven.

If the purpose of the above verses was to explain the doctrine of redemption, then why did Jesus not explain it in detail especially when it constituted a cardinal article of faith, belief wherein was essential for salvation?

One hears day and night expressions such as a certain

person has sacrificed his life in order to save his nation - such expressions are used in relation to prophets and leaders of nations. Nobody, however, contrues such expressions to the effect that the sin of Adam has been imposed on the nation. On the contrary, the leader has himself tolerated the punishment inflicted on him.

Then, if there is room to construe such verses in the manner alleged, then one is fire to infer also that Jesus assumed upon himself all the sins of his community. Hence, punishment would not be given notwithstanding the sins committed until the day of judgement. Whereas, this is refuted from the beginning by all the Churches.

For this reason, those Christian theologians who read these verses impartially have instead of inferring the complex philosophy of redemption, understood the word in their ordinary sense as explained by us above. In the beginning of Christian history, this was the view of coelestius. Then the sect known as Socinians also interpreted the verses in this manner. The Encyclopaedia Britannica states in this regard:

> "Those people found in Christ's life are only a sublime example of the way to salvation."

Abelard was of the view that the meaning of redemption was simply that the life and death of Jesus was a complete lesson in mercy and compassion.

In fact, the above verses clearly do not prove the meaning of the doctrine of redemption as contended for today. The meaning of those verses relied upon is something else.

Now, reverting to disciples, we cannot find even one sentence of theirs which support the doctrine of redemption. Hence, the first person who expouses this doctrine was Paul who expounded it philosophically in his letter to the Romans.

> "Therefore as sin came into the world through one man and death through sin, and so death spread to all

> men because all men sinned - sin indeed was in the world before the law was given. But sin is not counted where there is no law. Yet death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over those whose sins were not like the transgression of Adam, who was the type of the one who has to come. But the free gift is not like the trespass. for it many died through one man's trespass, much more have the grace of that one man Jesus Christ abounded for many...and the free gift is not like the effect of that one man's sin. for the judgment following one trespass brought condemnation, but the free gift following many trespasses brings justification. If, because of one man's trespass, death reigned through that one man, much more will those who receive the abundance of grace and the free gift of righteousness reign in life through the one man Jesus Christ...then as one man's trespass led to condemnation for all men, one man's act of righteousness leads to acquittal and life for all men". (Rom 5:12)

He explains further:

> "Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? We were buried therefore with him by baptism into death, so that as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the father, we too might walk in newness of life. Hence we know that our old self was crucified with him so that the sinful body might be destroyed, and we might no longer be enslaved to sin". (Rom 6:3)

This is the very same theory of redemption which we have set out in the first chapter in detail. This doctrine has not been espoused by any person prior to Paul. Hence, he is the founder of the doctrine.

The Order to Act on the Torah

After discussing the basic doctrines of Christianity, it is desirable that we determine by research the teaching of Jesus in regard to specific matters or orders. And what changes were effected by Paul?

Jesus has clearly stated on a number of occasions that

his purpose was not to oppose the Torah, but to confirm it. To the extent that it is stated in the gospels that Jesus did not come to abrogate it. It is reported by Matthew:

> "Think not that I have come to abolish the law and the Prophet s; I have come not to abolish t hem but to fulfil them. For truly, I say to you, till heaven and earth pass away, not an iota, not a dot, will pass from the law until all is accomplished". (Matt 5:17)

Moreover, on one occasion he stated:

> "So whatever you wish that men would do to you, do so to them; for this is the law and the Prophets". (Matt 7:12)

It follows that Jesus fundamentally regarded the Torah as worthy of respect and action thereon.

But, what is the theory of Paul on the rulings of the Torah? This appears from his statements in his letter to the Galatians, as follows:

> "Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law, having become a curse for us". (Gal 3:13)

He says further:

> "Now before faith came, we were confined under the law, kept under restraint until faith should be revealed. So that the Law was our custodian until Christ came, that we might be justified by faith but now that faith has come, we are no longer under a custodian...." (Gal 3:23)

In his letter to the Ephesians, Paul states:

> "By abolishing in his flesh the Law of Commandments and Ordinances....thereby bringing the hostility to an end". (Eph 2:15)

In the letter to the Hebrews he says:

> "For when there is a change in the Priesthood, there is necessarily a change in the law as well". (Heb. 7:12-13)

Further he says:

> "For it that first covenant (Torah) had been faultless, there would have been no occasion for a second".

> (Heb. 8:7)
>
> "In speaking of a new covenant he treats the first as obsolete. And what is becoming obsolete and growing old is ready to vanish away". (8:13)

In the light of the afore going statements, Paul has totally ended the practical relevance and importance of the Torah, and has abrogated all its orders and rulings.

Last Supper

The details of this ritual were set out in the previous chapter. This form of worship ranks amongst the most important rituals of Christianity. But there is no reference in Mark and Matthew to an order by Jesus direct ing that this act be made a perpetual ritual. Paul was the first to render it a ritual (I Cor 11:24), and Luke followed suit because he was a student of Paul. Christian theologians have conceded this. Hence FC Burkitt says: [56]

> "The account of the Last Supper in Mark does not indicate that this act must be celebrated in the future; but St. Paul when referring to the act attributes it to Jesus and adds the following sentence: 'Do this in remembrance of me."

The Order or Circumcision

The Order of Circumcision has come down from the time of Abraham. Torah says:

> "As for you, you shall keep my covenant, you and your descendants after you throughout their generations. This is my covenant, which you shall keep, between me and you and your descendants after you. Every male among you shall be circumcised...so shall my covenant be in you flesh an everlasting covenant . An uncircumcised male who is not circumcised ion the flesh of his foreskin shall be cut off from his people; he has broken my covenant". (Gen. 17:9-14)

And addressing Moses,

> "And on the eighth day of the flesh of his foreskin shall

56. It must be noted that the word "Law" in the Bible refers to the Torah.

be circumcised". (Lev. 12:3)

Jesus himself was circumcised, as stated in Luke 2:21. Thereafter there is no statement of Jesus to the effect that the Order Circumcision has been abrogated. In this regard, the theory of Paul appears from his letters. In his letter to the Galatians, he says:

> Now I, Paul say to You that if you receive circumcision, Christ will be of no advantage to you". (Gal. 5:2)

He says further:

> "For neither circumcision counts for anything, nor uncircumcision, but a new creation". (Gal 6:15)

Historical Evidence

The above discussion shows manifestly the extent of the conflict between the theories of Jesus and Paul; and also demonstrates that the basic tenets of modern Christianity are not part of the teachings of Jesus but have in fact been formulated by Paul. Paul is the founder of the Doctrines of Trinity, Incarnation, Redemption, the Last Supper, Non-Adherence to the Torah and Abrogation of Circumcision. We would not be unjust if we said that Paul is, on the basis of the above historical evidence, the founder and originator of Christianity. However, it is desirable that further historical evidence elucidating this claim be presented. For that purpose, we have to study the biography of Paul, even if reliable material thereon is limited. Moreover, the Acts of the Apostles, the letters of Paul himself and the writings of Christian theologians will be referred to in corroboration of this claim.

Journey to Arabia

We have already stated that Paul was a Jew in origin. He later claimed faith in Jesus. If he truly brought faith in Jesus, then it followed logically that after this spiritual transformation he ought to have spent as much time as possible with those disciples of Jesus who acquired their learning directly from Jesus, and who were the greatest

scholars of Christianity at that time.

However, the life of Paul demonstrates that immediately after his spiritual transformation , he did not go to the disciples at Jerusalem. Instead, he went to the southern regions of Syria. In the letter named Galatians, Paul himself writes:

> "But when he who had set me apart before I was born, and had called me through his grace, was pleased to reveal his son to me, in order that I might preach him among the gentiles. I did not confer with flesh and blood, nor did I go up to Jerusalem to those who were apostles before me, but I sent away into Arabia; and again I returned to Damascus". (Gal. 1:15-17)

What was the reason for going to Arabia? The Encyclopaedia Britannica states:

> "Paul quickly saw the need to stay in a quiet and peaceful area where he could reflect over his new position. Hence he went to the Southern regions of Damascus....the main problem facing him was to interpret the law and the teaching of Jesus in a new form in the light of his own novel experience".

The well known Christian historian James Mackinon says in his excellent work [57] "From Christ to Constantine" as follows:

> "At his conversion he....went away into Arabia (Nabataea) -- apparently to think out the implications of his new faith, rather than to preach to the Nabataeans. It was only three years later that he went to Jerusalem to visit Peter and James, the Lord's brother, presumably to consult them on the tradition about Jesus".

The question is why did Paul undergo three years of seclusion after bringing faith in Jesus? Why did he not acquire learning and benefit from those who had benefitted

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57. Burkitt, vol.3, p. 148. If you read the account of the Last Supper in the book of Mark, you will not find any order directing tha it be observed in the future; but St. Paul when referring to the Last Supper adds the following sentence which th ascribes to Jesus: "Do this in rememberance of me."

directly from Jesus? Has not the answer been clearly given by the above quotations which are to the effect that Paul did not wish to adopt the teachings of Jesus which were regarded by the disciples as Christian, but he wished to give the Christian faith a new form. For that purpose he required time for reflection in a place of seclusion. His purpose was to replace the pristine religion of Jesus with a new religion for which he desired to use the name of Jesus. A well known biographer of PAUL FJ fakes Jackson interprets this act of Paul as follows: [58]

> "Moreover, he believed that he was acting under the direct guidance of God. As he told the Galatians he had gone to debate with the older apostles at Jerusalem "By Revelation". Later the "spirit of Jesus" as will be seen, directed his mission on its journey. In choosing SILAS as his companion he was doubtless acting under the belief that what he did was God's will and he returned to the scene of his former preaching with an evident determination to carry his message as widely afield as God would permit him".

A little consideration will show that this conclusion is irrational. In the final analysis, he asserts that the spiritual status of Paul reached such a height that he was not in need of the training of any disciple in order to understand the teaching of Jesus. If by means of this extraordinary step, Paul had proclaimed the same message which is established through the disciples and the gospel, then to a certain extent this interpretation would have been acceptable. But, you have read before that Paul expounded a theory which was in direct conflict with the teachings of Jesus. In such a situation, there must be some proof to the effect that Paul received from God instruction in such doctrine -- whereupon the previous form or expression of Christianity had been abrogated. In the absence of such proof, is this naked claim of such merit that it should form the basis of revolutionizing Christianity?

Moreover, if there were to come immediately after

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58. Mackinon, p. 91

Jesus a revolutionary disciple, why did Jesus not give any indication or information of such coming? Yet, according to Christians, Jesus informed about the descent of the Holy Spirit at the time of the Pentecost, an event which was not revolutionary in itself. But he did not inform of the coming of Paul as a messenger.

The Conduct of the Disciples towards Paul

An objection may be raised to the effect that if the claim of Paul were wrong, and that instead of following Christianity, he was distorting it, why did the disciples of Christ assist Paul?

The answer to this question requires explanation. Our research reveals that paul did not immediately on meeting the disciples propound his revolutionary theories. But that in the beginning, he came to them as a sincere follower. Hence, the disciples assisted him. But, as he began gradually to introduce changes to Christian beliefs and attack its basic conceptions, the disciples separated themselves from him completely.

Unfortunately, we have only two means of determining the situation of that time. One is the letters of paul himself; the other the book Acts by his student Luke. Both are clearly insufficient and not free from Paulian influence. Notwithstanding, it is not difficult to conclude on the basis of these two means together with other historical evidence, that there were extremely serious differences between Paul and the disciples of Jesus. In order that the reality may emerge, we shall review the relationship of Paul with different disciples of Jesus in sufficient detail.

Paul and Baranbas

The first of the 12 disciples to meet Paul after his spiritual transformation, and to stay with him for a long period, was Barnabas. What was his status amongst the disciples? This appears from the following statement of the Acts:

> "Thus Joseph who was surnamed by the Apostles Barnabas (which means, son of encouragement), a levite, a native of Cyprus, sold a field which belonged to him, and brought the money and laid it at the Apostles feet". (Acts 4:36)

This was the Barnabas who certified Paul as true before all the disciples, and showed them that Paul has become like them in belief. Whereas until that time, the disciples were not certain of this. Luke writes:

> "And they were all afraid of him, for they did not believe that he was a disciple. But Barnabas took him, and brought him to the Apostles, and declared to them how on the road he had seen the Lord, who spoke to him, and how at Damascus he had preached boldly in the name of Jesus ". (Acts 4 : 36)

This was the Barnabas who certified Paul as true before all the disciples, and showed them that Paul has become like them in belief. Whereas until that time, the disciples were not certain of this. Luke writes:

According o the Acts, both Paul and Barnabas were companions for a long period, and both preached Christianity together, (see Acts 11 : 25) to the extent that the other disciples testified in regard to them as follows:

> "Men who have risked their lives for the sake of our Lord Jesus Christ". (Acts 15 : 26)

Until the fifteenth Chapter of the Acts, both Barnabas and Paul are portrayed as closely connected in all matters. But, thereafter, an event suddenly occurs which requires special attention. After staying together for such a lengthy period and jointly undertaking the task of preaching and propagation, there arises suddenly a very serious dispute between the two to the extent that it was not possible anymore for both to stay together. The event is narrated by the Acts in such a manner that the reader does not even suspect of this before. Luke writes:

> "And after some days Paul said to Barnabas, 'Come, let us return and visit the brethren in every city where we proclaimed the word of the Lord, and see now they

> are. And Barnabas wanted to take with them John called Mark. But Paul thought best not to take with them one who had withdrawn from them in Pamphylia, and had not gone with them to the work. And there arose a sharp contention, sot that they separated from each other; Barnabas took Mark with him and sailed away to Cyprus but Paul chose silas and departed, being commended by the brethren to the grace of the Lord. And he went through Syria and Cilicia, strengthening the Churches". (Acts 15 : 36-41)

The Acts ostensibly attribute this serious dispute to the fact that Barnabas wished to take with him John (Mark), and Paul refused. In our view, the cause of such a serious contention cannot be such a small matter - but this permanent separation of the two must certainly be ascribed to fundamental differences. The following supports this:

1. The greek words employed by Luke in the Acts to describe the "separation" and "contention" are unusually severe. Blaiklock in his commentary to the Acts, [59] writes:

> "Luke who honestly writes of the difference between the two companions (Paul and Barnabas) used a very strong world ('Paraxusmus") - which has been correctly rendered as 'sharp' in the English translation; (King James Version). Again, a very strong word for the Greek language has been used for 'separation."

Is it true that such a serious difference which necessitated the use of drastic language arose simply on the basis that one person desired to take with him John (MARK), and the other not? Such differences and disputes are not infrequent in their occurance. But, they do not result in permanent separation of close companions who especially are agreed on the noble and holy objectives on which such companionship is based. At this juncture some of the followers of Paul indirectly seek to blame barnabas by insinuating that he sacrificed his friendship and religious objectives by seeking to take with him a relative. (John

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59. Foakes Jackson, p. 129.
60. Blaiklock, p. 118.

called MARK)[60]. Luke is the student of Paul. It should be considered whether Barnabas, who according to him, "was amongst the leading figures of early Christianity" and who devoted and risked his life in the propagation would for the sake of a relative sacrifice the noble objects of propagation. The simple truth is that the difference of opinion between Paul and Barnabas was theological. When barnabas saw that Paul was altering the basic doctrines of Christianity, he separated himself from him. And Paul's pupil, Luke, has explained the difference in a manner that if blame were to be apportioned, then blame would be levelled at Barnabas, and Paul would be free of fault.

2. Then the nice thing is that Paul later accepts the companionship of John (Mark).

In the letter to Timothy (2), he says:

> "Get Mark and bring him with you for he is very useful in serving me". (Tim. 4:11)

In his letter to the Colossians, he writes:

> "Aristarchus my fellow prisoner greets you; and Mark the cousin of Barnabas (concerning whom you have received instructions - if he comes to you, receive him)" (Col. 4 : 10)

We learn from this that the difference between Mark and Paul was not of serious importance. Hence, Paul accepted his companionship later. But, now where in the New Testament or in any historical book is there reference to the fact that the relationship between Barnabas and Paul was restored. The question is, if the cause of the dispute was Mark, then why was the relationship between Paul and Barnabas not restored after Paul had accepted Mark?

3. No where in t he letters of Paul is it stated that the cause of the dispute between him and Barnabas was Mark. On the contrary, we find one sentence, which throws some light on the dispute between the two. In the letter to Galatians, Paul writes:

> "But when Cephas came to Antioch I opposed him to his face, because he stood condemned. For before certain men came from James, he ate with the gentiles. But when they came he drew back and separated himself, fearing the circumcision party. And with him the rest of the Jews acted insincerely, SO THAT EVEN BARNABAS WAS CARRIED AWAY BY THEIR INSINCERITY". (Gal. 2 : 11)

In this quotation, Paul refers to the differences amongst the Christians which appeared in Jerusalem and Antioch after the ascent of Jesus. The majority of the inhabitants of Jerusalem and Antioch after the ascent of Jesus. The majority of the inhabitants of Jerusalem were Jews, and it was only later they embraced Christianity. The majority of the people of Antioch were polytheists, and embraced Christianity after propagation by the disciples. The first group are referred to in the bible as "Jewish Christians", and the second as Gentile Christians". The Jewish Christians asserted that it was necessary to o circumcision and to act on all the laws of the Law of Moses. Hence, they were also called "The Circumcised". The gentiles however, asserted that circumcision and the like was not necessary. The result was that the Jewish Christians who regarded as unlawful the slaughter of the gentiles, did not like to eat and intermingle with the gentiles. Paul was the founder and upholder of these views of the gentiles. He made these endeavours in order to obtain support from the gentiles, and to ensure that their views were same as his.

In the above except from the Galatians, Paul criticised Barnabas and Peter for this reason, namely, that both supported the party of circumcision whilst staying in Antioch, and separated themselves from the new followers of Paul who did not uphold circumcision and the Law of Moses. Consequently, the Reverend Petersen Smith writes: [61]

> "Peter used to sit mostly at Antioch with those who came from Jerusalem, and who knew him before.

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61. Loewenich, p. 50.

> Hence, they concurred with him very quickly. Other Jewish Christians were also influenced by Peter to the extent that Barnabas also began separating from the Gentile Christians. This form of conduct affected these new Christians and ,.Paul tolerated the position as far as possible. But very quickly he began opposing it even if that meant opposing his colleagues".

It is apparent that this event precedes by a few days the separation between Barnabas and Paul. Because the coming of Peter to Antioch was a little after the meeting of the disciples in Jerusalem, and there is not much distance in time between the meeting of the disciples and the separation of Barnabas; Luke has narrate ed both incidents in the fifteenth chapter of the Acts.

Accordingly, it is most probable that the sharp contention between Barnabas and Paul referred to by Luke in strong words was due to these fundamental theological difference and not so much to the companionship of John Mark. Paul did not consider necessary for his followers circumcision and abiding by the law of Moses. And Barnabas was not willing to overlook the law which was greatly emphasized by the Bible, and in regard to which there was no possibility of abrogation.

Hence, Reverend Petersen Smith also perceives this aspect -- namely that the cause of separation of Paul and Barnabas was not simply Mark, but serious theoretical differences. He writes:

> "Barnabas and Peter who both were great persons must have admitted their mistake. Hence, the problem would have been resolved. Notwithstanding, the possibility remains that there were difference between them which became manifest later".

As if the Reverend concedes that the basis of the separation of Paul and Barnabas was theoretical differences.

Council of Jerusalem

At this stage, an objection arises; it is stated in the 15th

chapter of Acts that the disciples met in Jerusalem and decided that he gentiles only be invited to embrace Christianity, and that they be not required t abide by the Law of Moses. Apart from Paul, Barnabas, Peter an James were also party to this decision. Then, how is it possible for Barnabas and Peter to differ with Paul on the ground that Paul is not regarding adherence to the Law of Moses and circumcision as compulsory for the gentiles? If Peter and Barnabas held a view contrary to that of Paul, then they would not have issued a ruling the meeting in Jerusalem to the effect that the gentiles were not bound by the Law of Moses.

This objection appears sound. If, however, recourse is had to the conditions and circumstances surrounding the meeting at Jerusalem, and the circumstances relating to the separation of Paul and Barnabas, the objection is dispelled.

Our research reveals that the decision of the council of Jerusalem to exempt the gentiles from adherence to the Law of Moses was taken in the light of the prevailing circumstances. The decision was not meant to exclude the gentiles forever from adherence to the Law of Moses. It appeared that adherence to the detailed Law of Moses was an obstacle to the gentiles of the time in embracing Christianity. They were afraid to embrace the Christian faith because they would have had to abide by the Law of Moses. Some less learned people had explained to them that both bringing faith in Jesus and abiding by the Law of Moses was necessary for salvation in the hereafter. If the Law of Moses was not acted upon, salvation could not be obtained. Hence, Luke writes:

> "But some men came down from Judea and were teaching the brethren, 'unless you circumcised according to the custom of Moses, you cannot be saved'." (Acts 15 :1)

It is clear that this instruction was wrong. Circumcision and abiding by the detailed laws of Moses, although

compulsory in the Christian faith, was however not a prerequisite to faith, and nor could it be made a basis of salvation. If a non-Muslim refuses to accept Islam only on the basis that he will have to undergo circumcision, what will be the position of the scholars? Will they exclude him from the fold of Islam on the basis of circumcision? Clearly not - in such a situation, the non-Muslim will be told that the Order of Circumcision whilst necessary is not the basis of salvation. Hence, he must adopt the cardinal beliefs of Islam and for that purpose he will not have to undergo circumcision as a condition precedent. The effect is not that the Law of Circumcision has been exempted in relation to non-Muslims. The meaning is simply that the non-Muslim is saved from *Kufr* disbelief).

The same procedure was adopted by the disciples. Hence, when the matter was discussed at the Council of Jerusalem, it was unanimously decided that if the gentile could not endure adherence to the detailed Law of Moses, they nevertheless be allowed to embrace Christianity by accepting the basic tenets. This is clearly supported by the following statement of Peter at the Council of Jerusalem:

> "Now therefore why do you make trial of God by putting yoke upon the neck of the disciples which neither our fathers nor we have been able to bear? But we believe that we shall be saved through the grace of the Lord Jesus, just as they will". (Acts 15:10-11)

Is not the clear meaning of this excerpt that some of the detailed rules of the Torah are so difficult to act upon that they and their forbears could not fully act upon them. Notwithstanding, they are people of faith and desirous of salvation, then why can the gentiles not leave some of the details of the law and still bring faith and hope in salvation? 62

One must bear in mind that the Council of Jerusalem

62. Peterson Smith, p. 88-89.

did not discuss the question "Are the Laws of Torah obligatory on the gentiles or not?" The question under discussion was "Must the gentiles be ordered to abide by the Law of Torah or not?" --Our research reveals that there was no difference of opinion amongst the disciples on the obligatory nature of the Law of Torah. All agreed that this law was in itself obligatory. Debate centred around the question that experience showed that gentiles would not be able to act upon the details of the law -- hence, why should propagation not be restricted to calling them to accept the cardinal beliefs? For this reason, Luke describes the condition of those who considered adherence to the Law of Torah necessary, as follows:

> "But some believers who belonged to the party of the Pharisees rose up, and said, 'It is necessary to circumcise them, and to charge them to keep the law of Moses'." (Acts 15:5)

In reply, James stated his judgement as follows:

> "Therefore my Judgement is that we should not trouble those of the gentiles who turn to God, but should write to them to abstain from the pollutions of idols, and from unchastity and from what is strangled and from blood". (Acts 15:19-20)

The council wrote a letter to the gentiles stating therein:

> "For it has seemed good to us to lay upon you no greater burden than these necessary things: that you abstain from what has been sacrificed to idols and from blood and from what is strangled and from unchastity. If yo keep yourselves from these, you will do well. Farewell". (Act s 15:28-39)

The above quotations clearly indicate that the disciples did not render the law of torah as abrogated. But, in order to accommodate a great need, they allowed the gentiles to accept Christianity without the need to adhere to the Law of Torah. Reverend Manley writes:

> "On their return Paul and Barnabas learn of the debate cantering around whether the non-Jews could be admitted to the churches on adhering to the

> prescribed conditions. This was common in Antioch. And Paul and Barnabas followed this principle during the course of their journeys. And non-Jews were admitted to the churches without being subject to circumcision or the rituals of the Torah. However, the Jewish Christians belonging to the Church of Jerusalem were adamant that these conditions be imposed on them. Paul and Barnabas as leaders of the delegation from Antioch were sent to the Council of Jerusalem. The council ruled that such conditions must not be imposed on the new convers who were not Jews. To foster unity between the Jewish and Gentile Christians, the Council laid down that the Gentile Christians should avoid meat dedicated to idols, blood, meat of strangled animals, adultery, and that they should observe the high morals of the Law of Moses (Torah).

It is clear from the above that the purpose of the disciples was not to abrogate the Law of Torah insofar as the gentiles were concerned, but that their purpose was not to impose any condition for their entry into Christianity.

This was the original position of the disciples which was announced at the council of Jerusalem. Thereafter when Barnabas and Paul went to Antioch, Paul explained this announcement of the disciples by teaching that all the Laws of the Torah were absolutely abrogated, and that those laws were a curse from which they had been released. (Gal 3: 13) Now, there was no need to act on them.

It is clear that the acceptance of this claim of Paul would overturn Christianity. Hence, Peter and Barnabas opposed Paul at this juncture, and Paul describes this as follows:

> "But when Cephas (Peter) came to Antioch, I opposed him to his face, because he stood condemned. For before certain men came from James, he ate with gentiles; but when they came he drew back and seperated himself, fearing the circumcision party. And with him the rest of the Jews acted insincerely, so that even Barnabas was carried away by their

The Letter Named Galatians

It appears that in consequence of the opposition of Peter and Barnabas to Paul, a large group of original Christians cut themselves off from Paul. To the extent that the area of Galatia which was inhabited by gentiles became subject to discord. The result was that the people of Galatia began to regard Paul in a bad light. Hence, Paul, whilst in Antioch worte a letter to the Galatians wherein he strongly opposed those who regarded the Law of Torah as binding to a degree on the gentiles. For a number of reasons, this letter stands out amongst all the letters of Paul. One reason is that it is chronologically the first of the 14 letters of Paul. Second, because this was the first time that Paul openly propounded his theories. Prior to this, he had not so clearly set forth his theories. Thirdly, he appears hostile in this letter and repeatedly curses his opponents. Fourthly, he indicated for the first time that he was not in need of any disciple to learn the Christian faith, but that he acquired his knowledge directly through revelation.

In order to understand Paul properly, it is necessary to study this letter carefully. Hence, we set out below certain important aspects [63].

> "The purpose of writing this important letter was that certain Jewish Christians had attacked the gospel which Paul had conveyed to the churches of Galatia. The teaching of these false teachers was that the gospel which was proclaimed by Paul was only the first step in a Christian life. In order to derive full blessing, it was necessary for the new converts to act on the Jewish Law (3:3)... they slandered Paul as a man without principle. He himself acted on the Jewish Law but did not demand the same from his converts. Their method of attack was that he (Paul) was different from the 12 disciples, and therefore had no right. For the disciples were superior in all respects to Paul. It is apparent that such arguments caused a

63. If Peter intended to abrogate the Law of Moses permanently for the gentiles, then he ought to have also abrogated it for the Jewish Christians. If he found the law intolerable for the one, he would have found it so for the other.

disturbance amongst the (majority of the Galatians, and the opponents of Paul thereby achieved their object" [64].

In Encyclopaedia Britannica [65] the purpose of the letter is stated as follows:

"It was only later that he heard of a danger of a relapse, owing to the influence of some agitators who persuaded the Galatians that the apostle was not really authorized, that his gospel required to be supplemented by closer adherence to the Jewish code, that ritual and even circumcision were needful to a full Christian life, as the primitive and original apostles taught. In other words, the Galatians were induced to believe that the sole valid charter to privileges in the Messianic order of Christ lay inobservance of the Jewish law, which remained obligatory upon all converts, even on those who came over from paganism. These intruders belonged to the Jewish Christian party in the primitive Church; they feared deeply that the ethical interests of the Church would be compromised if the Jewish Law were dropped, and also their sympathis were with the party of Jews, as reflected in the story of Acts 15."

These excerpts produce the following conclusions:

1. The opponents of Paul at Galatia were distinguished members of the Old Church.
2. They were of the view that the gentiles who entered the fold of Christianity without circumcision - this was their first step. In order to live a complete Christian life, they had to undergo circumcision and abide by the Law of Torah.
3. They asserted that the interpretation of the Christian faith was the right of the disciples and not Paul.
4. According to their view, the teaching of the original disciples was to the effect that circumcision and adherence too the Law of Torah was necessary for a complete Christian life.

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64. Galatians, 13:3.
65. Britannica.

It is clear therefore that the original objection of the opponents of Paul was that he was opposed to the disciples, which he was not en it led to do. Hence if the disciples were of the same view as Paul, then the correct course for Paul to follow was to cause the disciples t write a letter in his defence, or to state in his own letter that his views were the same as those of the disciples. The disciples, bearing in mind, had already issued a ruling at the Council of Jerusalem that circumcision and other details of the Law of Torah were not necessary.

However, Paul did not even write one sentence in his letter to the galatians to the effect that his views were the same as those of the disciples. Instead, he claimed that he was not in need of the protection or learning of the disciples, but that in fact he received his learning directly from God by way of revelation. He writes:

> "For I would have you to know, brethren, that the gospel which was preached by me is not man's gospel. For I did not receive it from man, nor was I taught it, but it came through a revelation of Jesus Christ". (Gal 1:11)

But on the contrary, he proceeds to declare Peter as "condemned" and Barnabas as "insincere" (2:11), and endeavours to prove that he received revelation directly from God. It is therefore clear that the angle from which Paul was writing his letter to the Galatians was not concurred in by the disciples. Otherwise, he would have stated at the outset that the disciples agree with him thereby terminating the discussion.

An objection may be raised to the effect t hat according to Christian scholars of recent times, the letter to Galatians was written prior to the Council of Jerusalem. Hence, because the viewpoint of the disciples on the issue was not known prior t the council, Paul did not quote them in his letter. In our view, it is wrong to say that the letter to the Galatians was written prior to the Council of Jerusalem. Because Paul writes in the letter:

> "But when Cephas (Peter) came to Antioch I opposed him to his face, because he stood condemned". (2:11)

Here, Paul maintains the coming of Peter to Antioch. This must have occurred after the Council of Jerusalem, just as Encyclopaedia Britannica states:[66]

> "In Galatians 2:11 Paul reveals that despite the covenant of Jerusalem, Peter displayed in indecision in his policy towards the gentiles".

It follows that this event must have occurred after the meeting of the Council of Jerusalem. In addition, most biographers of Paul hold that the event occurred after manner. And the words themselves allude to the fact that the even occurred after the convening of the Council of Jerusalem. Because Paul could only condemn Peter if the latter acted contrary to his then existing statements. If Peter did not previously declare that the gentiles were permitted not to abide by the Law of Torah, then how could Paul so easily condemn him? The words clearly convey that Peter supported Paul at the Council of Jerusalem, and now opposed him. Hence, the convening of the Council of Jerusalem preceded the coming of Peter to Antioch since Paul mentions the coming of Peter to Antioch in his letter to Galatians. It follows that the letter was written after the Council of Jerusalem. Accordingly, in our view, the viewpoint of the early Christian scholars is correct, as stated by G.T. Manley: [67]

> "The view was expressed before that Paul wrote the letter to the churches of Galatia during his missionary journeys at a time when he wrote the letter to the Romans, and this event occurred after the Council of the Acts 15".

Conclusions

The aforegoing discussion has conclusively established the following:

1. In the beginning, Barnabas and the other disciples

66. Britannica, "Galatians, Epistle to The", vol. 9, p.97.
67. Britannica, vol.17, p. 642; article "Peter".

believed that Paul had truly brought faith in Christianity.

2. On this basis, Barnabas stayed with Paul for a long period of time.
3. Thereafter, Barnabas separat ed himself from Paul on the grounds of theological and theoretical differences.
4. The Council of Jerusalem did not permanently abrogate circumcision and adherence to the detailed law of Torah for the gentiles, but the disciples permitted the gentiles to accept Christianity without adhering to that law as a first step towards living a complete Christian life.
5. However, Paul began to preach that all the laws of the Torah were abrogated. The laws were a curse from which they were redeemed. (3:13) and that if they underwent circumcision, Christ would be of no advantage to them (5:1). Hence, Peter and Barnabas opposed Paul at Antioch.
6. As a result of the opposition of the disciples, a tremendous outcry against Paul arose to the effect that he had opposed the disciples. In response, Paul wrote the letter to the Galatians.
7. In that letter, instead of concurring with the disciples, he opposed them. He directed his endeavours to prove that he received knowledge directly through revelation and therefore was not in need of being taught by the disciples. (Gal 1:11-12)
8. The letter was written after the convening of the council of Jerusalem. It followed that the support which Paul received from the disciples at the council now ended. The disciples now opposed him, and therefore Paul did not make reference to support from the disciples in his letter.
9. All the letters of Paul were written after this event. Because according to G.T. Manley, the letter written to the Galatians is chronologically Paul's first letter.

Hence, the Doctrines of Trinity, Redemption, Incarnation and Abrogation of Law off Torah represent the personal theories of Paul, and were not supported by the disciples.

After Separation

Now, we will attempt to see where barnabas went after his serious contention with Paul. The Acts indicate only that after his separation with Paul he went to Cyprus with Mark. Apart from this, the Acts make no mention of him. Other Christian histories are totally silent of the later life of Barnabas. The Encyclopaedia Britannica says:[68]

> "When Barnabas sails away with Make to resume work in Cyprus, the mists of history close about him. Only now and again we catch fugitive glimpses of him and his work."

The question is that barnabas was a leading personality of early Christianity, and devoted his whole life to preaching and propagating Christianity - was not worthy, after his separation from Paul, of being mentioned by the pupils of Paul (such as Luke), albeit in a few lines? The conclusion is inescapable that Barnabas knew the reality of Paul, and thereafter endeavoured to inform people of the distortions being introduced by Paul in Christianity. Hence, the pupils of Paul would obviously not mention him.

Gospel of Barnabas

This rational conclusion becomes virtually a fact when we read the first page of the gospel of Barnabas which was found in the sixteenth century in the private library of Pope Scuts:

> "Dearly beloved, the great and wonderful God hath during these past days visited us by his prophet Jesus Christ in great mercy of teaching and miracles, by reason whereof many being deceived of Satan, under pretence of piety, are preaching most impious doctrine, calling Jesus son of God, repudiating the

68. G.T. Manley, p. 373.
69. Britannica, vol. 3, p.118; article, "Barnabus".

> circumcision ordained of God forever, and permitting every unclean meat among whom also Paul hath been deceived, whereof I speak not without grief, for which cause I am writing that truth which I have seen and heard, in the intercourse that I have had with Jesus, in order that ye may be saved and not be deceived of Satan and perish in the judgement of God. Therefore beware of everyone that preaceth unto you new doctrine contrary to that which I write, that ye may be saved eternally".

This is the gospel of Barnabas in relation to which great efforts were made to obliterate it. In the 5th Century BC (100 years before the coming of the Holy Prophet Muhammad ﷺ, Pope Jelasius I issued an edict to the effect that the reader of this gospel is a criminal, and today it is claimed that it has been written by a Muslim. [69]

Hence, there can be no doubt whatsoever that present day Christianity represents the theories of Paul, and is not connected whatsoever with the teaching of Jesus or his disciples.

Paul and Peter

After looking at the relationship between Paul and Barnabas, we now look at the relationship between Paul and Peter; and whether Peter supported or opposed the theories of Paul.

Peter is more important because he is regarded as the head of the Catholic Church, and the highest in rank amongst all the disciples.

1) The Acts, which explains the endeavours of the disciples sets out until the fifteenth chapter the details of practically all the endeavours of Peter. In that period, Peter and Paul were of the same view. But it is astonishing that The Acts which suppose to set out the activities of the disciples, suddenly becomes silent, and does not mention the name of Peter in its last chapter (28). Mackinon writes: [70]

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70. See generally, Britannica, vol. 3, p.118.

> "After the Jerusalem Conference Peter disappears from the narrative in acts." (p116)

Encyclopaedia Britannica says: [71]

> "In the Acts, the final reference to Peter is connected with the council of Jerusalem, where he adopted a broadminded policy towards the Gentiles."

The question naturally arises: why does Peter who is regarded as the greatest disciple and who is mentioned until the 15th Chapter suddenly become so unimportant that he is not mentioned further at all? The answer is found in Paul's letter to the Galatians which has been mentioned repeatedly:

> "But when Cephas (Peter) came t o Antioch I opposed him to face, because he stood condemned". (Gal 2:11)

As mentioned before, this event took place immediately after the convening of the council of Jerusalem. Hence, the conclusion is inescapable that Luke mentions Peter until the Council of Jerusalem because Peter had not opposed Paul until then. But thereafter at Antioch, when Peter opposed him, due to his theories, Luke stopped mentioning events relating to Peter.

2) In the light of these indications, it is most probable that as a consequence of the dispute at Antioch, Peter also separated himself from Paul just as Barnabas did. And he formed a group apart from Paul so that the correct doctrines of Christianity could be preached. This is support ed by the following statement of Paul in his letter to the Corinthians (1):

> "For it has been reported to me that there is quarrelling among you... what I mean is that each one of you says, 'I belong to Paul', or 'I belong to Apollos', or 'I belong to Paul', or 'I belong to Cephas (Peter)', 'I belong to Christ'." (Cor 1:12)

It is clear that Cephas (Peter) had at that time formed

71. Mackinon, p. 116.

his own group which was separate from the group of Paul, an that there was dissension between these two groups. The same conclusion is reached by Encyclopaedia Britannica which states:

> "The words of Corinthians indicate that Peter had a separate following among the Corinthians."

This is the only reference to Peter after the council of Jerusalem. It is apparent that it is not difficult to conclude that Peter made many endeavours to save the original Christian religion from the distortions of Paul. Unfortunately, all the available material of that time was written by the followers of Paul. Hence, we cannot say where Peter went thereafter, and what sacrifices he made.

Some say that he lived in Asia Minor, and more particularly in the regions of Babylon. Irenaeus, lement and others say t hat he lived in Rome. Jerome says that he lived in Antioch. There is no certainty about the circumstances surrounding his death. Terullien says that the emperor Neru killed him. Origen says that he was crucified.

Letters of Peter

A doubt could arise here:

The New testament contains two letter written by Peter. In these letters Peter has expounded the same theories as those of paul. In fact, in the second letter he has written to the following extent:

> "So also our beloved brother Paul wrote to you according to the wisdom given to him speaking of this as he does in all his letters." (Pet 3:15)

It appears therefore that there was no difference of opinion between Peter and Paul.

The answer is that according to Christian scholars, the ascription of both letters to Peter is incorrect. Either the letters were written by another whose name was Peter or somebody deliberately ascribed the letters to Peter the

disciple.

In regard to the first letter, the Encyclopaedia Britannica [72] says:

> "The question of date and authorship are closely connected, for many critics have maintained that the contents of the episle imply a date subsequent to the deat h of St Peter.

References to persecution occur in i.6, ii.12, iv. 12-19, v 9; the Recipients are undergoing a "Fiery Trial"; they have tto bear reproches, and to enquire an evil reputation;... These are very similar conditions to those implied in Priwy's letter to Trajan, and therefore it is argued that I. Peter belongs to the same period and was written long after the Apostle's death".

The Encyclopaedia shows by means of futher proof that the first letter was not that of Peter.

The position of the second letter is even more delicate than the first letter. In explaining its position, the Encylopaedia says:

> "As I Peter was the first of the Catholic Epistles to be admitted into the cannon, so 11. Peter was the last. It was accepted at Alexandria in the third century, thence it passed into the cannon of the Church of Constantinople; but not until the fourth century was it accepted at Rome, and they Syrian Church admitted it in the sixth century.

The cumulative weight of the following objections to its authenticity is generally held to disprove it's claim to Petrine authorship :

(a) Origen, the first to mention it as Petrine, admits that its authorship was disputed;

(b) The style, language and thought not only differ from I. Peter but from the rest of the New Testament.

(c) References to immorality Associated with false teaching

72. Britannica, vol. 17, p. 642; article "Peter".

seem to belong to a date much later than that of the Apostle Peter.

(d) The Incorporation of Jude makes Petrine authorship improbable.

(e) The attribution of scriptural authority to the Pauline Epistles (iii.16) points to a date not earlier than the second century...

It may have been written in Egypt, where it first appears; or a Deissmann thinks it may have originated in Asia Minor."

The above clearly proves that Christian scholars themselves refuse to accept the letters as the work of Peter. Hence one cannot claim on the basis of these two letters that Peter agreed with Paul, and that there was no difference between the two.

James and Paul

At the time of Jesus, John was the name of three persons:

1) Yaqub Ibn Halafi (James the son of Alphaeus) who was called James the Younger and who was only mentioned amongst the list of disciples, or with those women who gathered at the time of crucifixion (Mark 15:40). Apart from t his, there is no reference to him in the new testament.

2) Yaqub Ibn Zebedee (James the son of Zebedee) who was the brother of John the disciple. He was killed by King Herod a little after the ascension of Jesus to the heavens. (Acts 12:2) Hence, he did not have any specific contact with Paul during his lifetime. And he passed away prior to the Council of Jerusalem.

3) Yaqub Ibn Yusuf Najaar (James the Carpenter) who is declared by the Bible to be the brother of Jesus. (Matt 13:21; John 7:5); or he brought faith in the last stage of Jesus's life; or according to Paul, Christ appeared to him at

the resurrection (Cor (1) 15:7). The Acts indicate that he was the head of the council of Jerusalem and hence he proclaimed its decision. (Acts 15:19). Although he ruled that circumcision and adherence to the law of Torah was not a pre-condition to embracing the Christian faith, it is almost unanimously accepted by Christian scholars that this ruling was temporary. Whereas, he was a very strict adherent of the law of Torah. James Mackinon[73] writes:

> "With this comparatively liberal policy the Conservative Party, though fain to comply for the time being, was by no means satisfied, Even James, whilst waiving the demand for circumcision, retained scruples on the score of the free fellowship of Jewish and Gentile believers...So great was his authority that Peter and even Barnabas... refrained from "eating with the Gentiles" (p 95).

At another place he writes in regard to James: [74]

> "And it is evident from Josephus' brief notice, as well as from the longer account Heg esippus, that his austere character and his observance of the law woon the good-will of the Jews". (p 119)

Then, it is surprising that after the Council of Jerusalem, the Acts mention James at only one place (Acts 17:26). There also James requested Paul to purify himself for opposing the law of Torah, and advised him to abide by that law.

At least, it is established that James was not in agreement with Paul's theories which is ascribed to James. In this regard, James Mackinon [75] says:

> "And the weight of evidence is not in favour of his (James) authorship". (p 120)

John and Paul

After Peter and Barnabas, John the soon of Zebedee

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73. Britannica, vol. 17, p.642; article "Peter, First Epistle to the".
74. Mackinon, p. 95.
75. Mackinon, p. 119

occupies that highest status amongst the disciples. According to Mackinon, he is regarded as one of the three pillars of the Church. Strangely, John also like Peter and Barnabas, is not referred to in the Acts after the Council of Jerusalem. Thereafter, his condition is unknown. James Mackinon [76] writes:

> "Like Peter, John disappears from the narrative in Acts after the Jerusalem Conference at which he is still prominent as on of the three "pillars" of the church...where he evangelised after leaving Jerusalem is unknown". (p 118)

We can therefore safely infer that John also like Peter and Barnabas, separated himself from Paul and the Council of Jerusalem due to theological differences. It appears that John then attempted to spread the true teachings of Christianity. for this reason, the pupils of Paul did not consider him worthy of mention after the Council of Jerusalem.

There remains for consideration the gospel of John and three letters ascribed to John in the new testament. We have stated previously that the Christian scholars are virtually unanimous that their author is not John (the disciple) but John the elder.

Other Disciples

These are the disciples who are mentioned in the Acts or in the New Testament.

Apart from them, the condition of the other disciples are even more clouded. It is not even established whether Paul met them or not. James Mackinon [77] writes:

> "Of the later mission work of the rest of the twelve there is little authentic to tell. It assigns to them various mission spheres from Gaul to India...Eusebius takes Thomas to Parthia, which then included the Northern fringe of India, whilst the "Acts of Thomas"

76. Mackinon, p. 120.
77. Mackinon, p. 118.

> take him direct to India by way of Egypt and the Indian Ocean. Bartholomew likewise goes to India and Andrew to Scythia, North of the Black Sea. Thaddeus proceeds to Edissa, whose King Abgar had exchanged letters with Jesus, and duly heals the king and converts many of his subjects...
>
> "Needless to say, these tales are very largely pure fiction. It is possible that Thomas and Bartholomew found their way to 'India' though the exact region covered by this term is doubtful". (p 121)

Conclusions

The following is established from the above discussion of the 12 disciples:

1) From the twelve disciples, two had died prior to the Council of Jerusalem, namely james son of Zebedee and Judas Iscariot.

2) We do not know the condition of seven disciples after the ascent of Jesus to the heavens, namely, James, Thomas, Bartholomew, Thaddeus, Philip, Matthew and Andrew.

3) From amongst the remaining three, we have established that Barnabas and Peter separated themselves from Paul after the Council of Jerusalem on grounds of serious and fundamental theological and doctrinal differences. There remains only John son of Zebedee, whose reference as mentioned before is suddenly omitted after the Council of Jerusalem, just as in the case of Peter and Barnabas.

The above analysis manifestly shows that the disciples supported Paul, and certified him as true, as long as he did not take any steps to distort Christian teachings. But, after the Council of Jerusalem, when Paul proclaimed his revolutionary theories, and expounded them in his letter to the Galatians (his first letter), all the disciples then living separated from him.

Hence, it is potentially wrong to conclude on the basis of the events that led to the Council of Jerusalem that the

disciples concurred in Paul's theories of trinity, incarnation, redemption, etc. The reality is that the founder of these theories Paul, and such theories have no connection whatsoever with Jesus or his disciples.

Opponents of Paul

The question naturally arises If Paul had in reality distorted and altered the Christian faith, and established a new religion which was contrary to the teachings of Jesus, why did effective opposition to him not emerge with the result that his theories became prevalent in the Christian world, and the true Christianity disappeared.

If we search for the answer to this question in the pages of history, we clearly discover that Paul and his theories were most strongly opposed during the first three centuries. And that the opponents of Paul at that time were not less influential (in effect and number), than Paul himself. But when , by chance in the third century, Christianity was declared the official state religion of the Byzantine empire, the protectors and supporters of Paul dominated the government of that day. And they not only attempted to exterminate the opponents of Paul but also to destroy all the material on which the opponents of Paul could base their arguments. The result was that the religion of Paul began to spread in the world, and gradually the original Christian faith became obliterated.

We set forth examples of the severity of the opposition to Paul and his theories in the first three centuries:

1) The opposition to Paul commenced from the time when he exploited the decision of the council of Jerusalem by declaring that the law of Torah had been totally abrogated. In answer to his opponents, Paul wrote the letter to the Galatians. We have established by reference to Encyclopaedia Britannica that the opponents of Paul, asserted that he was deviating from the teachings of the disciples. These opponents were connected to the Old Jewish Christian Church, and were led by certain leading

figures.

2) The opposition against Paul continued to grow after his letters. James Mackinion [78] writes:

"It is incorrect to assume that the views of Paul or the author of the Gospel of John largely formed the basis of religious belief immediately after the era of the disciples although Paul continued to influence the minds of those times. the theology of the fourth Gospel finally became dominant over the Churches. It is however a reality that they early Catholic Church had thrown out the Paulinian thinking. And in the second century, wherever there were the followers of the Gospel of John, there were also to be found its opponents. Paul's conception of Christianity was by no measure of means the prevailing beliefs at the time for the disciples".

3) In the second century of Christian era. Irenaeus, mentions a sect known as Nazarine Ebionites. J.M. Roberston [79] writes in this regard:

"These people denied the divinity of Jesus and did not accept Paul as an Apostle".

Encyclopaedia Britannica [80] quoting Irenaeus states:

> "They held that Christ was a miraculously endowed man, and rejected Paul as an apostate; from the Mosaic law to the customs and ordinances of which, including circumcision, they steadily adhered."

4) The views of Paul of Samosata, who was the bishop of Antioch from 260 AD to 272 AD, was almost the same. The depth of his influence could be seen from the fact that he was supported by the schools of Lucian and Arius in the fourth century.

5) Then the sect of Arius in the fourth century raised strong opposition against the doctrine of trinity in the whole

78. Mackinon, p. 121.
79. Mackinon, chapter 7.
80. Robertson Jim, p.5.

Christian world. The strife and controversy reached such great heights, as may be gathered from the following statements of the well known christian scholar Theodoret [81].

> "Disputes and Contentions arose in every city and in every village concerning theological dogmas...there were indeed scenes fit for the tragic stage, over which tears might have been shed. For it was not, as in bygone days, when the church was attacked by strangers and enemies; but now nations of the same country, who dwelt under one roof and sat down at one table, fought against each other, not with spears, but with their tongues".

The extent of the importance attained by the sect of Arius, and the great number of its followers, may be gauged by the detailed refutation of that sect by St. Augustine in his book "On the Trinity".

6) In 325 AD, the emperor Constantine convened the Council of Nicaea to settle the disputes. The Council rejected the views of Arius. But first of all, Mackinon writes:

> "It is extremely difficult to say that there was present at this council the representation of the entire Christian world. There were very few representatives from the western regions. In all 300 Bishops were represented, the majority of whom were Greek".

The council did not seriously for a minute consider the theory of Arius. Theodoret writes:

> "The views of Arius were rejected out of hand on presentation, and at that moment they were declared false".

What was the result? The words of Mackinon speak for themselves:

> "The party of Athanasius secured victory because it had the support of the Emperor. At the same time, the government secured victory in stifling religious opposition by force and suppressing independent religious opinion".

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81. Britannica, vol.7, p.881.

James Mackinon has written in detail that despite this decision, the dispute continued for years amongst the people. Especially the Eastern Church was not willing to accept the decision of the council but the government slowly forced its hand on them.

The above indicates clearly that there were countless opponents of Paul in the first three centuries of the Christian era. They remained large in number until suppressed by the government.

Recent Times

Now, we shall quote some views of the Christian scholars of recent times. You will gauge from these that we are not alone in stating that Paul is the founder of Christianity. Those Christians scholars who have studied the bible impartially have also reached the same conclusion.

1) The Encyclopaedia Britannica in describing the condition of Paul states:

> "One group amongst the writers, represented for example by W. Wrede, who were by no means opposed to Paul, opine that Paul changed Christianity to such an extent that he has become its second founder. In reality he is the founder of that 'church Christianity' which is totally different from the Christianity brought by Jesus. They say that 'follow Jesus or follow Paul, but both cannot be followed simultaneously'."

2) Although Von Loewinch is a strong supporter of Paul, he endorses the following statement of W. Wrede:

> "Paul separated Christianity from Judaism and gave it a distinct form. Hence he is the creator of those churches which were built in the name of Jesus".

Further on Von Loewinch writes:

> "If there were no Paul, then Christianity would have been a sect of Judaism, and would not have been a universal religion"

Is that not an open admission of the fact that Paul

changed and altered Christianity to render it a world religion? According to Von Loewinch, this was a valuable and commendable service of Paul's, but in our view this was really distortion.

3) James Mackinon, an eminent Christian scholar who cannot be said to be an opponent of Paul, himself openly admits:

> "The train of thought is distinctively his own. Whether it is altogether in accord with the mind of Jesus is not so evident in spite of his claim to direct revelation...at the same time, Jesus' conception of the law in itself is hardly in accordance with that of Paul...In this respect Paul's claim that he received his Gospel by revelation from Christ is rather problematic".

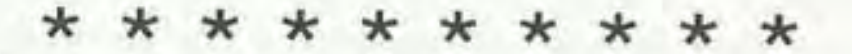
4) Another biographer of Paul, Foakes Jackson, who is his supporter, finally confesses after recording the views of his opponents:

> "If there were no Paul, Christianity would have been different. And if there were no Jesus, Christianity would not have been possible".

5) In 1953, a book entitled "The Narene Gospel Restored" was published in America. The book was jointly authored by Robert Graves and Joshua Fodro. The latter was the son of a well known Christian Bishop. In the introduction to this book, a detailed critique of Paul has been undertaken whereby its is proved that Paul had to a very great extent corrupted the teachings of Jesus, and that the disciples were for this reason displeased with him.

The statement of Christian scholars quoted above are at the level of examples. If the views of the opponents of Paul were to be collected, they would constitute a large book. The purpose of citing the views of Christian scholars is to show that numerous Christian scholars have also been forced to concede that the real founder of modern day Christianity is Paul, and not Jesus.

It is hoped that the above mentioned proofs will convey to a person seeking the truth that the Christianity of to-day has no connection whatsoever with the teaching of Jesus. It is an innovation of Paul. Hence, this religion should be named "Paulnity" and not Christianity.



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